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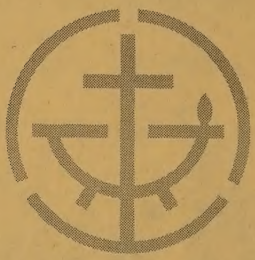

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SERMONS OF

HENRY WARD BEECHER

1813-1887.

In Plymouth Church, Brooklyn

FROM STENOGRAPHIC REPORTS BY T. J. ELLINWOOD

VOLUME V.

SEPTEMBER, 1870 TO MARCH, 1871

NEW YORK
FORDS, HOWARD, & HULBERT
1893

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I am devoutly grateful and thankful for the privilege of preaching the truth as it is in Jesus, to multitudes whom I shall never see in the flesh; and my prayer is, that these sermons may still go on their way doing good.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Sept. 15, 1870.

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THE GROWTH OF CHRIST IN US.

"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you."—GAL. IV., 19.

No one can fail to observe, in reading our Lord's discourses, how unlike a king or great person he carried himself upon earth; how he loved to bring home his heavenly nature to his disciples and friends by all the figures and symbols which belonged to domestic life. That which belonged to us—whatever was human—he selected as a garment, and clothed himself with it. He was parent, brother, friend. He was for the hungry, bread; and for the thirsty, water. He was the light—a star sometimes, and a candle at other times. He was a vine. He was a husbandman. He was a shepherd. He was a merchant, a rich proprietor, a householder. Almost every element of use, in one way or another, he attaches to himself, either as a title, or by some parable.

Into this peculiar method of representation, no one of his apostles entered with such fullness of sympathy and such richness, as Paul. It would be interesting, if we had time, to run through the variations which Paul produced on this theme. For I think it can be shown that in his hands there is scarcely one great elemental law, hardly a familiar phenomenon, in the world, which, in the Gospels and in the Epistles conjointly, is not associated tenderly with the name of Jesus Christ. Our text is a very striking instance under this head. Bold as the Hebrews were on matters where we are exceedingly sensitive, it is yet without offence that Paul represents himself as a mother, without saying so. He says:

"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again."

They were carried in his soul, yet unborn. In another place he says:

"Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel."

Kindled with this imagery, his mind shot along the figure, and took another form of it, without note or warning; and he says that Christ was being carried in them, as it were, a babe unborn. They

SUNDAY MORNING, October 24, 1869. LESSON: EPH. IV. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection), Nos. 142, 381, 1251.

were the mothers, and Christ was to be born into their souls. This having Christ in us you will all recognize as a not unfamiliar thought; but the apostle's idea is that we are Bethlehem, as it were—that we are the stable, as it were. No, we are the mother, as it were. Christ is being born into each one of us, severally, a babe; and our Christ, even when grown to years, and mature, is, after all, the Christ that was born in us.

Without stopping to illustrate other points in the figure, we shall carry it out in some particularity in regard to practical developments in Christian life and experience.

Christ was God. He was sent to interpret to men God's nature, his disposition, his sympathy and love; to show men that, on the very field where all their defeats occurred, it was possible for one to live purely and truly in his body and in his circumstances. Christ took upon himself the human body. In Scripture language, he was *God manifest in the flesh.* He *took upon himself the form of a servant.* He was very God, walking in the limitation and circumscription of the human body, this limitation and circumscription making him man. And there is no other manhood which is like that. Our manhood is but a faint and far-off dream and image of that. We come to true manhood only when we come to it through divinity. But our Saviour did not descend from heaven like a sun full-orbed, glorious. He came into the world as a babe. He went to the lowest bound of human weakness. He opened the door into life through which every babe comes. Nor did he then suddenly unsheath his bloom, and instantly spring up in fragrant beauty. He was as a *root out of dry ground*, according to the prediction of the prophets. He was a babe. He as a babe grew, came into boyhood, and passed through, gradually, all the stages of unfolding. He was a real boy. He had the imperfections and limitations of other boys. He experienced their nascent hopes and desires. Then he passed to immature manhood; and then to full manhood. He went through a long line of natural development, that he might be tried just as we are tried.

Now, although the apostle nowhere carries out this into a full allegory, yet it may be clearly seen that this thought dwelt in his mind; viz., that as Christ came into this world, and was first a babe, and then a youth, and finally a man, so there was an order in the stages of our personal experience; and that Christ in us was born, first as a babe, and went on through all the stages of youth up to maturity; so that we have in the spiritual experience of our nature the parallel, the analogue, of that which Christ himself went through.

At its first entrance, this divine, disinterested and authoritative love in the human soul is not in full power. The first experience in

the soul, of Christ, who is the spirit of love, and of a love which carries conscience and wisdom with it, is a nascent experience. We are babes in this element. Small, is it, as a grain of mustard seed. Obscure, is it, as the hidden yeast. Helpless, is it, as new-born infancy. When a child is born, the great world exists and is organized around about it. Here are tremendous forces of every kind. Here are natural laws, and secondary laws which are framed by men for the purposes of society, and which are second only in force and necessity to natural laws. And the child is ignorant of them all, is helpless before them all, and must lean upon the bosom of another, and learn, little by little, first how to control natural law, and then how to control civil law. For laws are not masters, but servants, and he who knows first how to obey them may afterward ride them; and they will carry him with the power that God has infused into them.

When the babe first comes into life, everything is against him. All the great machinery goes grinding and thundering by it; and the child has neither knowledge of it, nor experience in it, nor power over it. He stands, as it were, outside, waiting to be indoctrinated into the conditions of the world into which he comes. So it is in the infancy of Christ in the human soul. All the channels of our life have been filled up. And this divine birth, this babe-experience, as it were, of Christ in the soul, takes place surrounded on all sides by master passions organized, by a character already ordained, and by habits already fixed and firm and operative. And that element of Christ which is called *the Christ in us*, that new disposition in us which is like him, is to pass through the infancy of learning, unfolding. How rightly to understand, how rightly to act, to obey, and then to control, is to be found out little by little, and by just such steps as those by which infancy finds out how to manage the world that is round about it.

The first estate of infancy, therefore, is to be fed, warmed, nourished. It is not to be thrust out on the errands which are proper to universal manhood in its maturity. It must be carried in the arms, or it will perish. And so the germs of Christian life, when they first begin, are but germs, tender, and needing nourishment, and watching, and care, and more than they can give to themselves. So that they who are born into the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, are not fit, at the moment of their conversion, to be teachers of others. They may be witnesses of what Christ has done for them; but they are infants. They are but just born. The Christian then is but in its infancy. As in his mortal life Jesus was, as I have said, a boy, a youth, so there is a corresponding stage in the normal Christian experience—a stage of hope, eager, expectant, unqualified by experience, but fixed by zeal. This is that stage in which, having gained certain degrees of power and

knowledge, mightily set on by buoyancy and hopefulness, youth plans and executes, full of the glow of enterprise. The virtues at that time are intensely active. The faults of that period are the faults of overstimulation; of untempered, undisciplined strength; and the temptations and defeats and victories are marked with the peculiarities of youthful immaturity. They are unripe; and their sins are sins of unripeness.

And as it is in youth, so, precisely, is it in Christian development. After the primal birth into the kingdom, comes the youth of Christ, as it were, in men—the limitations of unknowing, inexperience, strong zeal, barrenness, and untempered virtues. There are stages of the soul's development, if we could trace them out, through which we pass that precisely correspond to certain stages of the outward secular life. First comes the childhood. Then comes the youth. Then comes the manhood. Then come consolidated impulses, which are habits. Then come virtues, which have cast off their germ-forms, half grown into perfect symmetry. Then come characters with strong foundations. And the walls of the mind are carried up, and the whole structure, more or less built already, tends to instant completion; to full-developed power; to strong, rich, ripe joyousness in the participation of life. And there is precisely the corresponding experience in the development of the spiritual life. Christ is born in us as a babe; and then there is the development, through youth, to full manhood in the Christian soul.

This great truth, therefore, is to be borne in mind, that Christian life begins at the point of weakness, and goes on by regular normal stages to maturity. It is first a spark, and then a flame, hidden in much smoke, and at last a pure and glowing coal.

With this unfolding of the primal idea, I proceed, now, to make some applications.

1. Children and youth may become disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, and may be safely gathered into the Christian fold, if only their parents and their pastors will be content to receive the babe-Christ in the young convert, or the young Christian. Churches, parents, and teachers are to bring up the children under their care *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;* but to a very large extent Christians have brought up their children in the hope that when they shall have arrived at years of discretion (which are usually supposed to be somewhere from fifteen to twenty-one years of age) they will then themselves become Christians. I hold that it is possible so to rear our children that they shall be converted from the cradle, and grow up *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*—some without a break, and some subject to these normal disturbances which come from physical causes in

the readjustment of the system at its maturity. If Christian parents and Christian teachers were consistent, and were in faith of the true Christ Jesus, I believe that generations of children might be brought up who never would know the point at which the transition was made. They would be taught to love Christ, and to adopt the great Christian element of character—love—and, by it, to cast out evil, to build, and to acquire habits and experiences, so that when they came to man's estate it would not be through all the tanglements, besetments and soilings of an ordinary earthly experience. They would come honorable, truthful, loving, full of faith, full of hope, full of purity, from the cradle to the church. And I do not simply believe this to be possible in rare cases. I do not believe there will ever be a day of millenium. I do not believe there will ever be a prevalence of Christianity, until, instead of trying to fish for the few adults that can be brought from evil into good, we learn how to take life at its beginnings, and to train generations from the first to true manhood, passing through infancy and youth into the full development of Christian life.

Persons, we all know, are more susceptible at the early age than at any other. Children are not superior to men in knowledge, nor in strength, nor in discrimination. There are a thousand of the acquirements by which a man battles with the world that they are not superior in. But there is one all important principle which belongs to childhood, and not to any other time; viz: that peculiar development of the soul by which it knows how to take hold of another, and to borrow its light from that other.

To borrow an orchard illustration, there is but one period of the year in which you can graft well. It may be possible to graft successfully at other times; but there is one period when you must make the transfer if you would take a bud from one tree, and graft it into another, and have it produce its kind, and do the best that it is capable of doing. There is but just one season when the bark lifts easily, and the staff is in the right condition.

There is a time, also, when the little natures bud easily, and graft easily. It is possible to graft them at other times, by extra elaboration; but more than half of the grafts will *blow out*, as the saying is. There is a period, however, in which ninety-nine out of a hundred will stick and grow. For all the adaptations of the child at that time are such as to incline it to borrow its life from another. It feeds upon another instinctively. It is a little parasite. It is but the transfer of that which is its need and instinct to the blessed Saviour. And then it becomes a Christian child. And so, adhering to Christ by love and by trust, and drawing its little life from Christ, it begins the Christian career. And they would go on and grow in thousands and thousands

of instances, if it were not that parents have the absurd notion that when Christ is born into persons, he is a self-registering and self-taking-care-of Christ, so that they say, "If my child is born of God, God will take care of his own work." As if a pomologist should come in and say, "I have put a graft into that tree, and if nature is true to herself, she will take care of that graft." Nobody says so about trees. The man binds up the graft so that it shall be held in its place, so that the water shall not get in, and so that it shall not be blown out, until it gains strength sufficient to take care of itself; and then he leaves it to the force of nature.

But many people, in bringing up their children *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, look with great suspicion on early Christian experiences. They are afraid of abnormal growths. They are afraid of such material as Sunday-school libraries and biographies are made up of. They regard early conversions as indicating disease at the root, or in the body of the tree. They do not believe in children being really Christians, because they do not see in the child that which they would look for in a ripe Christian. But if they would look for a babe Jesus in a little babe, they would find that there. And if they would treat the babe Christ as they would treat the babe boy, or the babe girl, and nourish it, and carry it in their arms, and rear it, step by step; if they would treat it as a little child embosomed and arm-encircled; if they would shield it as it goes through all temptation and all trial, they would make straighter Christians, better branched Christians, more fruitful Christians, than those that are made, at last, out of old and bad growths, by lopping away the pernicious boughs. There never will be the ripest and most symmetrical characters in the Church of Christ till we learn how to bring them up from the seed in the Spirit of the blessed Master.

There are many persons whose children give every evidence of being truly Christian, but whose parents shrink from bringing them into the fold. "Ah!" say they, "what if they should fall away?"

The shepherd's boy comes in and says, "the ewe has dropped a lamb far out in the pasture; shall I bring it up to the barn, and put it inside of the yard?" "No," says the shepherd, "let it stay out to-night, and if the wolf does not get it, and the cold chill does not kill it, and it lives till to-morrow, and the next day, it will be worth keeping, and you can bring it in." But if the lamb can live in spite of the cold and wind, and without the care of the shepherd, he does not need to bring it in then.

There are many persons who say of the young, "Shall they be gathered into the Church? Shall we run the risk of their bringing disgrace upon the Church by their fall? Which is the most important,

in the name of God, the Church, or the souls of men, for which Christ died? The Church, looked at as the servant of God's dear people, rises before my thougnt most beautiful; but if the Church dare to take the place of the soul of a man, and make itself more precious and nobler than the soul, the poorest and lowest and least, I will repudiate it. The servant has usurped the place of the master, under such circumstances. For the Church is God's slave, sent to take care of God's children, and if the Church is good for anything, it is good to take in little children, and to shelter them; to take in the wayfarer, and to shelter him; to take in the spiritually poor, and to shelter them.

Suppose that they do break down, and do not get well in the Church? Is a hospital brought into disgrace because patients die there whom the doctors have tried to cure? Is a school brought into disgrace because some dullards go in fools and come out idiots? And shall a Church be always trying to take care of itself, instead of taking care of that which God loves better than anything else—the souls of his dear children? Bring your little children into the Church. Let Christ be born in them the hope of glory. Let there be a babe Christ in their little experiences. Let them be formed into classes. Do not leave them out with the wolf. Do not leave them until they are strong enough to go along without a Church, and then bring them in. See that they are taken care of and nourished.

Those who have been brought into the Church young within the circuit of my own experience, have, on the whole, with single exceptions of miscarriage, here and there, endured, and come out into a true Christian life with far better prospects, and more symmetrical dispositions, than those who have been brought in late in life.

2. One may be a Christian who is yet very far from the beauty and symmetry and manhood of piety. We are not to suppose that they only are Christians who are *beautiful* Christians, or who are embellished with all Christian graces. A man may be a Christian, and his Christ may be a babe. A man may be a Christian, and the Christian nature in him may yet be, as it were, in its boyhood. A man may be a Christian, and yet the Christ in him may have reached only that stage in which it enters upon young manhood. A man may be a Christian, and the Christ in him may have entered upon his ministry, as it were, in the full ripeness of his manhood.

We are not, therefore, to suppose that persons are not Christians because they are very imperfect; because they break down in a thousand places; because they do with their religion just what children do with their worldly knowledge and power.

If a man's heart is in the cause, and he enlists in the army, he is a soldier, not when he is a veteran, but when he enlists. He is a soldier

just as really when his name goes down on the roll, and he goes out with the awkward squad to the first drill, as after he has been in the army five years—although he is not a soldier with the same degree and amplitude of experience. He is a soldier provided his heart is right, and he loves the cause, and he joins in earnest. The degree of imperfection and ignorance that is in him has nothing to do with the fact of his being a soldier.

When one approaches a school-house, the word sent out is never, "Have you learned?" The word of greeting at the school-house door always is, "Will you learn?" And he is a scholar who can say, "Yes, I have come to learn." For, shall the encyclopædia go to school to the spelling-book? Shall a rich, ripe, large, learned nature go back to the primary elements of experience? They who need the school, they who need the patience, the forbearance, the rule and discipline, are those who have but little, and wish to increase that little.

Therefore, they who have a spark of grace in their souls are Christians; but they are Christians beginning. They who have germs planted are Christians, only they are Christians afar off in the spring and seed-time—not in the summer and autumn—of the Christian experience. When a man has once looked up to God in the consciousness of his imperfection and sinfulness and transgression in this mortal life, and said, "I take the royalty of love as my ideal. and that law is my law, and love shall sit in the centre, and bring to judgment in me everything that is wicked, and cruel, and selfish, and unduly proud, and envious, and hateful; and, plied by the power of love, I will fight on the right and on the left; and I will subdue myself to that state of love"—when a man makes that declaration in sincerity, he has begun a Christian life. He is in the early stages of childhood; but he has begun it. For, the erecting of that right principle in the soul, and the beginning, by it, to subdue every part of the soul to the Lord Jesus Christ, is the setting up of the kingdom of God in the soul.

The one characteristic, critical thing, is the coming into sympathy with God, and receiving the impulse and purpose to organize the life on the principle of love, in all its equalities. If that element is found, the mere question of concomitant experience is a question of indifferency. Some men are born into the kingdom of God with very great joy; and the joy is a pleasant thing to have; it has its incidental benefits; but, after all, it is not the ecstacy of fruition that is significant. It is that silent other thing; viz., the principle at the core of your life which undertakes to organize your whole being on the law of love. And that may be established in a man without any outward experience. A person may come to a state in which he means to be like Christ, and means to cut off everything that hinders his being like

Christ, and to enforce outward and inward compliance to this law of love in Jesus Christ; and yet, he may not have light nor joy. But it is the raising up of that standard, the vindicating of that sovereign law in the soul, which constitutes the beginning of the Christian life. If it comes with joy, so much the better. If it does not come with joy, it is none the less true conversion.

3. In a Christian life, as in the ordinary life, there are two principles at work—first, the force of nature in the steady growth and unfolding of our normal powers; and secondly, the voluntary drill which, working in harmony with nature, we call *education*. A child, even if he received no instruction, would, by a natural process, grow taller and broader and stronger. His bones, by the law of nature, become better bones; his muscles become better muscles; and the brain develops itself, by the mere operation of things upon him, without school-house or instructor. And every man would make a certain degree of development and growth by the mere unfolding of his natural powers in this world. That, however, is not considered as enough. We hold that what may be called involuntary development must be supplemented by voluntary development, or drill. Every person, in order to grow to true manhood, besides what nature is doing for him, is to do a good deal for himself. He has to educate his eye, his ear, his tongue, his hand. He has to learn the trade that shall support him, or the profession which he will follow. It is astonishing for one to see what an amount of drill and spontaneous intuitional power we store up in ourselves, to attain *education*, as we call it.

It is precisely the same in the Christian life. As we are drilled in learning, in art, in virtue, in mechanic skill, in husbandry, in war, in commerce; as we are drilled to be, as it were, apprentices in those things in which we would excel in natural life, so, precisely, we need to be drilled in the Christian life. All men in Christ Jesus would have a certain growth and development, involuntarily, by the mere progress and unfolding of life and nature in them; but if any one is to have more than this spontaneous and natural development, it must be the result of special drill.

Christian graces, if I might so say without being misapprehended, are like so many trades. They are not to be learned theoretically; and certainly they are not created in us by the mere operation of the Spirit, nor by the forces of sanctified nature. We learn them just as we learn anything in outward life. It is supposed that the Spirit of God makes men humble; that it, as it were, sends humility into them. Just as dew falls, and orbs itself on the bearded grass, gemmed and jewelled on a summer's morning; so men think that the Christian graces fall down out of the great heavenly concave above them; and that all one

knows is, that he went to sleep a violet dry, and woke up a violet wet and beautiful! Many persons think that meekness, and gentleness, and humility, and faith, and patience, and hope, and joy in the Holy Ghost, are divine gifts. They *are* divine gifts, to be sure. So is corn a divine gift; so is wine a divine gift; and so are cattle on a thousand hills divine gifts; but men have to work for them. God gives them to man's industry, and not to his laziness. All gifts are divine gifts in such a sense as that. If the connection between the soul and God were to stop, these things would never take place; but He works together with us to will and to do these things. No man ever came to a state of Christian eminence by waiting and praying alone.

For instance, if you are going to learn humility, you must learn as a babe. You must learn, just as you would learn to be an artist. An artist may have natural aptitudes; artistic talent may be an inspirational tendency in some persons; but there never was a Michael Angelo nor a Raphael who did not go through drill. Though a man has genius, he has to put his eye to school, and his hands to school; and all his thoughts have to go to school; and it is only by months and months and years and years of assidious, discriminating practice, that he comes to be an immortal Raphael or Michael Angelo. And if in the cases of men of genius this is so, how much more must it be so in the cases of ordinary men! It is a universal law.

Now, no man ever was humble except he learned humility. You have felt what you supposed was humility because you prayed for it, and it came. Why yes, you had a flush of it; but you never had humility that you wore as a garment, that had not been wrought out. You have come to it by the suffering of the household, or by your voluntary endeavor, step by step, of Christian experience. You have been trained and drilled into it, as a soldier is drilled into military movements, and into prompt and almost unthinking obedience. Humility must be worked up from the lower stages into the higher stages.

Men say, "I supposed that if I became a Christian I should have faith; but it seems to me as though my faith were not as large as a grain of mustard-seed." Let me see your faith. Where is it? He holds up what he calls his faith, and says, "There it is;" and sure enough, it is no bigger than a grain of mustard seed. What have you done with it? "I have always kept it in my pocket, and prayed that God would increase it." Why did you not plant it? Did you suppose a grain of mustard-seed would grow in your pocket? Put it into the soil; give it moisture, give it rain, give it sunlight, give it summer; and then it will begin to thrive. Culture it; keep the weeds away; and God's sun will help it. And that grain of mustard-seed will grow, so that the birds will yet sing in the branches of it.

Persons say, "I lack faith." Have you ever studied for faith? Have you ever searched after faith? Have you ever drilled for faith? Have you ever put yourself to school for faith? Have you practiced it? And in practicing it, have you sought to see, when you missed, why you missed, and when you gained, how you might augment that gain in your next endeavor. Every Christian grace must be put to school. Or, to go back to the other figure, it must be bound out to apprenticeship.

And so it is with joy and peace in believing. Joy comes by flashes. So do warm days in January come by flashes. And what can you do except look out and enjoy them and thank God? But the birds do not come back for one day in January, nor for two. And the grass does not grow in January for one day or for two. The birds do not come, and you do not have grass, till one warm day succeeds another. One flush of joy is just like one warm day in January. It is better than nothing; but it is not of much value for practical uses. What you want is to learn how to create joy so that it shall be like the continuous sounds of a marriage bell, or like the coördinate sounds of many-voiced instruments. The question is, how joy shall spread itself through days and weeks in the midst of tribulations and troubles, and hold on its way, under the name of peace. You must learn that. But ah! men do not want to learn it.

There was a crystal, once, in a rock, which had conveyed to it the knowledge of the beauty of the outward world; and it prayed silently to the god of minerals that it would let it out, that it might see all this beauty. So the god sent a mineralogist, one day, with a hammer, who, suspecting what was in the rock, commenced beating it, and broke one part off, and then another, and another. And by-and-by the crystal began to be seen. And then, with chisel the man began to cut the rock right and left. And the crystal, being somewhat bruised, and much crowded, and greatly terrified, cried out, "I asked for deliverance, and not for this harsh treatment and this cruelty." Is there any other way to get a crystal out of the middle of a rock but to break the rock in pieces?

There are men praying that God would give them joy; and he takes hold of them, and begins to break off the environments and besetments by which they are confined—false pleasures, false joys, false ambitions, and false attachments—giving strong blows on this side, bearing heavily on that side, and in ten thousand ways doing violence to their natural feelings; and they cry out, "Hast thou become altogether my enemy? Art thou against me?" If they would listen to the reply of the Spirit of God, they would hear him say, "Did you not want joy? And how can joy come but by bringing out the Christ

that is in you? And how can the Christ that is in you be brought out if you will not suffer the things that are necessary to bring it out?" You must learn how to be joyful under care; how to be joyful under shame; and how to be joyful under contempt. You must learn how to be cast out and yet be more than your circumstances. You must learn how to stand by the side of God, and say, "Though all the world were against thee, dear Jesus, thou and I are mightier than they;" and then there will be perfect joy that will be like summer at the equator, that knows no frost, and no winter.

That which is true of joy, is true also of truth and of honesty. Honesty is not a thing which men are inspired with. Nobody knows how to be honest except so far as he learns. Nobody knows how to tell the truth except just so far as he has learned. And it is a science which will bear a good deal of studying. Most people learn to tell the truth as thousands of people used to learn to read and write and cipher, in their old-fashioned common school education. When they had learned to read words of easy syllables, they thought they had learned to read. An after use of reading as a means of education did not enter into their conception. Many persons learn to speak the truth in that way. Many people speak the truth just as far as they are in words of two syllables; and many people are honest just as far as that. They are honest about as far as the spelling-book carries them, and not much further. But *truth in the inward parts*—truth in faith, truth in love, truth in thought and in expression, truth direct and indirect, in all the relations of life—is a profound study. It is a science of life. But very few have explored it to its ultimate points. No man can tell the truth except in a very superficial way. No man can be glowingly like an angel of truth till he has gone to school to learn how. And that which is true of truth in this respect is true of honesty.

And so of purity. So of fidelity in little things. So of each Christian experience, with all the elements of beauty in it. All those things which are meant when we speak of *putting on the whole armor of God*, are learned little by little. Men cannot gain them by inspiration. They cannot gain them by a day's or a year's life. They must grow up into them in all things.

Hence, when I hear men say that there are many departments of Christian life in which they are fruitless, in which they have no gifts, I say to myself, "That is, you have never developed your gifts." It is true that men have different gifts; but it is also true that many of us are without gifts in certain directions, because they are dormant. We have never taught ourselves to exercise those gifts. Every part of those gifts can come by education. And though the Christian life may not be full in all, it will be far more perfect in all than it is in any new

4. The experiences of Christian life are not promiscuous. They stand in a certain order of nature. Just as in a garden all flowers do not blossom in Spring, nor wait till Autumn; as there is a regular succession, according to the temperament of the year, following a line of increasing heat; as there is an order of development in the tree; as there is first the leaf, and afterwards the green fruit, and then the ripe fruit, so is it in Christian life. Christ begins with us at the infant point, and develops in us steadily; and the later developments cannot be had until the intermediate ones are passed. We are steadily to grow; but at each point of growth we are, as it were, to seize the experiences of that point.

If this be so, it will undeceive us in respect to many of those yearnings and aspirations which we suppose to be signs and tokens of grace. Persons want those Christian experiences which they read of in Paul, or in John, without having had Paul's or John's history. They wish while children to be Christians as their fathers and mothers were, and to feel as they did. They want to anticipate the fruit of a long life, and have it in the first year of that life—which never can be.

When you were a boy you felt as I did, I suppose. You only wished that you were a man. And when you got on your first man's clothes, what an important day it was! and what an immense man you felt yourself to be! Boys, aspiring to manhood, want to learn to smoke, as a sign that they are men. They want to carry the various little insignia—and usually the vicious ones—of manhood. They long to be men at once, and are not content to be boys, and to come to manhood by proper unfoldings, and by the natural growth that takes place in Christian life. Persons are not willing to take the courses which belong to the state of development to which they have attained, but are constantly longing for those things which lie far on in the state to which they are going by-and-by. You must be a boy first, and then a youth, and then a man. Your experiences will follow the line of your true development inwardly.

Then comes the ripeness of Christian life. When, through years, or when through an experience that epitomizes years, men have known Christ, and the presence of Christ, and the power of Christ, then they come into a ripeness in which there is, comparatively, peace of mind.

I am sometimes asked, "Do you believe any man becomes perfect?" No, not perfect in any proper sense of that term. You may set up an artificial ideal of perfection; you may make it out of some question of obedience to law; a man may think himself to be perfect; but no man, to my judgment, is perfect who is unripe. And a man is not ripe so long as he lives in this world. He only approximates toward ripeness. But that which men feel after, and that which I re-

spect in those who seek perfection, is such an experience as grounds them in that *peace which passes all understanding*, and holds them steadfast, and is full of joy. I believe there are those who live in a state of perpetual tranquility and rest, with only occasional oscillations. And I believe that it is the privilege of Christian men, in their impure Christian condition, to reach that state in which they shall be praying always; praising always; rejoicing always. "Rejoice," says the apostle, "in the Lord; and again I say rejoice." I believe it is possible to attain these states. You do not need to raise technical questions of perfection. Only let the soul rise so that it always lives in the presence of God, and its Saviour, every hour and every moment, and that is enough. And it is attainable by-and-by, if men go through all the preliminary stages of experience, and are not discouraged, but patiently wait, until the time comes in which they rise to these higher experiences.

And now, my dear Christian brethren, how is it with you? At what stage are you of your Christian life? Go back, and how many years is it since you first named, before the world, the name of Jesus? Are you further along in conscious Christian experience than you were on that day? I am far from rebuking those who remember all their lives long the ecstacy of their early Christian life. There was something peculiar in it. Although later wedded life is incomparably richer than the earlier experiences of love, no matter how romantic they may be; yet one should not willingly part from the vision, though far back, of his first romantic love. Of all the things which the heart knows, the least ashamed should we be of our experiences of loving. Even when they are untaught, even when they are unripe fruit, they are the best fruit of our nature. And I should think that he had been badly mated, or had gone through a strange life, who, standing at eighty years, should say, "I thank God, above all things, for those first experiences of love that I had in my childhood." No, *no*, NO! The companionship and the actual life of love, carried through a score or two scores of years, mounts up in magnitude, and stands continental in riches, clothed with an amount of fruit and joy which never can be had emotionally. The life of love is better than the mere emotion of love. And if it is so in the ordinary conditions of men one toward another, how much more is it so in the conditions of the soul toward God.

Our first experience may have been rapturous, full of surprise, full of unbelief, stimulating, far beyond anything that we have had since; because the narrower the experience, the sharper is the point of it; and the bulkier the experience, the less sharp it is. As one needle will pierce to the quick, but twenty needles taken all together are

blunted; so one single line of experience will arrest the attention, often, when the whole concurrent experiences of the soul, being more important, would not seem so great.

When first people think they are delivered from the power of sin and Satan and death; when they first have a triumphant feeling that Christ loves them, and they know they love Christ, there is something wonderful and beautiful in it, and they should remember it as long as they live; but, after all, is that the best? And do you look back and say, "I never again had such experiences of love; I never again was so happy; I never again was so near to Christ?" Oh! what a life you have been living! Why, how far have you been? Is your Christ a babe yet? Born into your soul, did you turn the key of the chamber where he was? And did you send no schoolmaster and no nurse there? Did you starve the infant child? And has there never been any growth in that child? Is it but a phantom or vision in you? That child Jesus, born into your soul, should have grown, and should little by little have expelled the natural man, and swollen to all the proportions of your being, until he became Christ formed truly and perfectly in you.

How is it with you, dear Christian brethren? Have you grown in that part of your being which is represented by Christ's love, and humility, and disinterestedness? Have you imitated him in *going about doing good?* Have these elements of the divine nature in you severally grown and cohered symmetrically, and swollen to the proportions of full manhood?

On earth there is no sight more beautiful, and there never will be a sight more beautiful till He comes to reign a thousand years, than a character which has been steadfastly growing in every direction, and has come to old age rich and ripe. I am sorry to say that such characters are rare. Yet I would fain hope that in every neighborhood, or every line of relationship, there is some mother, some aunt, some saintly maiden sister, whose life has been a self-renunciation for the benefit of others, and who rises up to your eye bright, tranquil, sweet, unfathomable, always near to God, and always near to man. Are you like unto such? Have you walked the same path? Have you come into sympathy with that idea of Christian life and Christian character? Are you going backward? Are you standing still? Are you going forward? In which way are the motives of your spirit carrying you? Are they taking you away from God, or is God's spirit overcoming your natural selfishness, and bringing you nearer and nearer to him? The time is not far distant when you must render an account of this before the face of the Crucified.

Christian brethren, we have not long to live! It matters little

whether we have a roof or no roof over our heads; it matters little whether our name is kicked about as a football, or whether it is honored and crowned. These things are of very little consequence. That which we are to carry through the grave with us is not riches, nor fame, nor joy, but the essential structure of the soul,—its virtues; its moral magnanimities; its divinities. What have you to carry through? With what can you stand up in the sonship of God, and as heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ? How can you meet your God, and open your soul to him, and say, "Lord, here am I; and here are all my powers?" How can you stand before Christ and say, "I am in thine image, and I am satisfied?"

Oh! rise to that hour of satisfaction. There is not in the range of imagination anything conceivable like that. Oh! ever-restless heart; oh! ever-mourning spirit; oh! longing, yearning soul, there shall come an hour to thee when, if faithful to the Beloved, thou shalt rise into his presence, and behold the bright concave full of God's ministering spirits, and the Lord of glory on the throne; and thou shalt stand up unrebuked before them all; and, looking first upon them, and then upon yourself, shalt say, "I am satisfied. Nothing do I want from heaven or angels. I am satisfied. I am in thy likeness, and I am satisfied." To that blessed vision look forward, not only, but Christian brethren, prepare for the Bridegroom. And ere long, before we think, the sound will come, and we shall be summoned to go and meet our God.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, our Father, not as those who have never beheld; for we have come often by this living way of love. We have communed with thee. We have received the tokens of thy favor and of thy love. Thou dost not love our sins and our imperfections; but we are beloved, and we have felt thine arms. We know the touch of thine hand of benediction upon our head. Often and often it hath encircled us. And when we walk in the consciousness of thy paternal love; when our strength is renewed by these divine touches, we are indeed sons of God, and royal; and there is no earthly crown that can so crown us as thine hand does. And there are no riches that can make us so strong as thy favor, and thy loving kindness. And there is no such summer, and no such delight in all innocent sport, as thou dost grant to us when thou surroundest all our affections with thine own paternal spirit. And we are like children that bound in joy at the feet of their parents. At times there are days that are dark because they are days of disobedience. At times we are homesick, because we are separated from thee. At times we long for thee, and have less of joy than of wishing for joy. But our life is with thine. Though in our trouble thou dost yet abide many days afar off, and our dear ones die, thou comest at last. Thou dost never forsake us, though thou dost often seem to leave us. Thou dost never deal harshly with us, though thou dost deal with us severely. Thou art faithful. Thou wilt not make us happy by self-love, exaggerating all

our excellences, and hiding all our faults. Thou dost make us look into the gulf of our own experience, and see what our passions are. And when thou art regnant in beauty, and all is harmony in thy nature before our sight, oh! with what discord our own life moves around about thine. Then we look away from thee to abhor ourselves in dust and ashes. And yet thou dost not look upon us with abhorrence. Thou dost not even look upon us with the same abhorrence with which we look upon ourselves. For we are thy children, and are taken into thine arms to be healed. And thy love, though it would take sin from us as a disease, holds the essential self which we have in us. That germ which is the center of our being is dear to thee, and thou art looking far forward. Yea, as a blessed prophecy of love thou dost behold often in us what we are to be, rather than what we are, and roll on the days and the months and the years of experience, making haste to bear us forward that we may be without spot, or blemish, or wrinkle, and be presented before the throne of thy Father with infinite joy, and with glory unending.

And now, in this thy faithfulness, and in this thy great love, is all our hope. For, though we labor and strive, all our labor and strife is as the husbandman's toil in summer. If it were not for the summer it would be in vain. And as the summer brings forth its best fruit only for labor, so thou wilt not bring forth the best fruit in us without our labor. And yet, that labor is in thee. We live in thee. We move in thee. In thee we have our being. It is thy Spirit that works in us to will and to do. And in this joyful mystery—thy life in ours, we in thee, and thou in us,—we have traveled now many years. We are witnesses for thy truth. We are witnesses of thy fidelity. Thou dost not leave thy people. We are witnesses of thy generosity. Thou dost exceeding abundantly more than we ask or think. Our shadows are but half dark. Our life is full of radiance. And along the way, which is straight and narrow, and where we grind or cut ourselves, still are overhanging vines; and we pluck the clusters, and renew our strength, and go on again. Our life is ever watched. Angels are about us by day and by night, airy messengers sent by God, full of love and faithfulness, and executing his will to those who shall be saved. We rejoice, O Lord! that thou hast been with us in all the emergencies of life; in times of peril; in times of vehement temptation; in times when all nature sets itself up against all that there is in us of grace. Thou hast, O Lord! divided for us the Red Sea and the Jordan, and we have gone over. For us, and in us, thou hast fought, and we have subdued the inhabitants of the land, though we have not put them utterly away. In thee we have been radiant and victorious, and gained many things, with the prospect of many more, and the hope and confidence of them. And we rejoice in all thy wondrous love and kindness that hath thus far befriended us. But oh! what is it to that which is to come? What is the substance, and what is the joy of the experience of thy sway here, compared with the vision of it which is kindled by thy word and by thy Spirit in our hearts? We rejoice in the coming perfection. We lift up feeble hands pointing toward strength. We look away, and see ourselves as we are to be when we are like thee. We behold ourselves in the vision of faith, triumphing over our infirmities, elate in eternal youth, mortal in purity and love, and the powers thereof. And we rejoice, O Lord! that thus we may beforehand have something of our truest manhood, and may sit down beforehand at the banquet of thy coming love.

So, we beseech of thee that we may use our heavenly vision, not to make us weary of the world, but more faithful in it; not to tell us of that food which we have here, but to give us the moral grace to partake of it with contentment, knowing that ere long we shall be no more travelers at an inn, but children at home in our Father's house.

And grant, O Lord! that the reality of this may comfort us in losses; may console us in griefs; may encourage us in despondency; may rebuke

us when we are faint hearted, and would turn away from our life. May we be able to bear burdens as good soldiers. Oh! help us more and more to sink self in the glory and honor of God in ourselves. May we become heroic for Christ's sake, bearing about that precious Name. May we not count it hard if we are cast out for Christ's sake. And if we are cast out for bearing testimony to thy name, may we remember what thou didst to him of old who was cast out of the Synagogue because he bore witness to thy kindness and faithfulness. Go unto men and speak peaceably and comfortably unto them, and encourage them to believe that, standing with Christ outside of the Synagogue, more are they that are for them than are they that are against them.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt strengthen thy witnesses everywhere—those that silently bear witness amidst the cares and desponding duties of the household. Over-wearied with much watching; tried and troubled with vehement temptations; drawn every whither, still may they be able to triumph and become sons shrined in the household.

Help all those that are combating the world, and seeking to carve out their duties there. May they be able to wrestle with the mighty temptations that are brought to bear upon them, and overcome them all. And not only may they overcome temptations, but may they carry forward the work of holiness. And may justice shine in their hands. And may truth, like a star, fall upon the path that men should walk in. And so we beseech of thee that our young men may be strong and valiant for Christ everywhere.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless all those who are sick; all those who are withheld from the house of worship. May that Spirit which makes this place light and joyful be borne unto them. Give them a portion in due season. And may those walk, leaning on thine arm, whose feet go down to the valley of the shadow of death. And all the way through may thy rod and thy staff comfort them. Bear them beyond the flood, beyond the touch of death, and into the glories of immortality.

Be near to all those, to-day, who would render thanks in thine house for great mercies shown them. Accept the thanks of those who have come once again to the house of God for the first time in a long while. Remember children and companions, dearer than life, spared by thee. May they not forget their secret thoughts and the vows of their hearts when they plead with God for mercies. And now that thy mercies have come and crowned them with victory, may they not forget their covenants.

And accept the desires of those who are as strangers in a strange land in our midst to-day. If there are any that are homesick, O Lord Jesus! comfort them. If there are those whose hearts ache, and turn back, and find their beloved ones scattered everywhither, yet by faith may they be able to meet them all again in the house of prayer, in their Father's house.

Be with all those, we beseech thee, who labor in our Sabbath-schools and Bible-classes, and who go forth among the neglected and the poor, to carry the Gospel of humanity and of salvation through Jesus Christ to them. And we pray that they may never weary in well-doing, in season and out of season. They shall reap if they faint not.

And we pray that thy work may go on in thy Churches. More and more may thy truth be a living truth. More and more may it have power on the lives and hearts and dispositions of the people. May it be diffused in the experiences of thy Churches. Let thy kingdom come, everywhere. May woes, and the occasion of them, cease. And may despotisms pass away. May superstition be utterly overthrown. May the sweet truth of God's love in Christ Jesus carry emancipation everywhere. May humanity, and peace, and order, and thy kingdom, descend and dwell upon the earth, and Christ come and reign a thousand years.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

SIN'S RECOMPENSE.

"And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body is consumed, and say, How have I hated instruction and my heart despised reproof; and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me."—Prov. v., 11–13.

If all men believed at the beginning of their courses of life what they find at the end, there would be far less power in temptation, and many would turn aside from those paths which bring them to ruin; but it is one of the peculiarities of youth, that while it has unbounded faith in certain directions, it seldom has faith in regard to mischiefs which befall disobedience. In common with a large part of the adult community, the young are not sure that there is a moral government. Men say,

"How doth God know? and doth the Most High see and consider? Where is your God?"

There are many reasons which conspire to make men either over-confident in the beginnings of life, or even audacious.

There are, in the first place, the inexperience and thoughtlessness which belong to the young. They are ignorant. They have had no instruction at home, or only such as they might as well have missed. Thousands there are who have had no pains taken in the formation of their consciences. Conscience, even if it be strong by nature in them, has had no advantage of education. The intellect is as indispensable to a wise conscience as the conscience is to an intelligent understanding. And it is not surprising that children, adventuring with all the flush of life into unknown ways, do not give heed to advice or caution; especially considering how often caution and advice are given by men who are not altogether the most acceptable moralists—dried, withered up, pragmatical, fussy men—men that have outlived their appetites, and seem to wish to restrain the young from the enjoyment of the sap and blossom of life—long-faced men—men whose ideas are ascetic. The young frequently reject good advice because it comes from an unwelcome source. And sometimes moral caution is urged in ways which are repulsive. Of course, if it is true, if the word

Sunday Evening, October 17, 1869. Lesson: Isa. LXXIII. 3–26. Hymns (Plymouth Collection) Nos. 843, 732, 500.

is in consonance with human experience and the laws of God, it is better to accept it under the most offensive administration, than to go without it. And yet, there is a strong opposition in the young heart. There is a disposition to rebound. At a certain period of life sin becomes sweet, they think. Men do things sometimes because they are told not to do them. And the young, breaking away at that point of time in which they do not know whether they are under government or whether they are governing themselves—at that point when they wish to assert their liberty, and put it to proof—often do things which in later periods they scarcely would be tempted to do.

Besides all this, there is a hopefulness, a most defiant and audacious spirit in the young. They do not believe it is necessary that, certain courses being followed, they should reap mischief from them. They say, "I suppose others have gone on in such and such courses, and have come to harm; but then, they were stupid. It may be true that thousands have perished in this way; but then, they had not skill; they did not understand themselves."

The young man is cautioned in respect to the use of intoxicating agents, and the hecatombs that have been slaughtered are brought before his mind; but they are as nothing to him, and he says, "Yes, very likely it may be so; but I am not one that is apt to be overthrown in such a way as that. A man is a fool who cannot command himself. I can go as far as I please, and come back when I please. And because others are silly and weak, is no reason why I should not enjoy my natural strength and my liberty."

There is a hopefulness which goes beyond all bounds, frequently. For although, in right ways, a man should be hopeful, there may be an excess of hopefulness, even in right ways. When it is venturesome; when it is a hopefulness that at last threads along the path of evil, or near it, then it is positively bad. Hopefulness under such circumstances becomes infatuation. And yet, there are thousands who think they can pursue courses that in others are wrong, and eventuate in mischief, and not reach the mischief. Or, oftener, men think it possible for them to pursue a certain course as long as it tastes good, and then turn round and rinse out the mouth with virtue, and be as well off as though they had not gone into such a career. Men think they can first give themselves to the world, and that after they have squeezed the world as they would an orange, they can turn round, at the proper age—at thirty, or thirty-five, or forty, or forty-five—and become Christians. They say, "When I have reaped all that there is in vice while I am young, I will turn round, and reap all that there is in virtue and piety, and so gain two worlds—all there is of this, and all there is of that."

Now, there is no single pleasure that a manly man ought to love the flavor of, which is not permissible to a Christian. There is not a thing that a Christian may not have which every young man ought not to be ashamed to take. Piety does not shut up the avenues of enjoyment. True virtue makes every enjoying faculty more sensitive to joy. I repudiate and repel with scorn the imputation that when a man is a child of God, and is at peace with all God's laws in material things, social things, and moral things, he is shut up. He is enfranchised, rather. He is enlarged. He is ennobled. There is more music in him, in every single chord and faculty, than there can be in any other. There is no man so free, there is no man who has a range so boundless, as the man who is at peace with God. And yet, there are multitudes of persons who suppose that there are peculiar pleasures which cannot be reaped except by a reprobate course. There never was any mistake greater than that.

Then there are the reactions from an infelicitous way of teaching which tend to produce presumption in the young—either a disbelief in the reality and punishing nature of sin, or else a belief that they can avoid it, even if it do threaten. I mean the exaggerated and indiscriminating way in which sin is often held forth. Much of the instruction which is given on this subject is not wise. Conventional sins, too frequently, are almost the only ones that are held up. Children are scarcely rebuked if they are fundamentally proud, if they are envious and selfish and jealous; but if a child breaks any little family rule, he is whipped, or is roundly scolded. In other words, sins that violate conventional rules are punished. There are such things as family sins, that do not go outside of the family. There are sins of omission. For instance, the boy is required to hang his hat on a peg, and if he fails to do it, it is a sin; or, the boy is forbidden to make a noise in the house, and he tramps down stairs or through the hall, and that is a sin.

There are also church sins. Standing in the house of God with the hat on, and so desecrating the building, is a church sin. There is a great variety of church sins, such as not reading the Bible, and the non-observance of Sundays and other holy days.

Now, I do not undertake to say that family rules are not important, or that school rules are not important, or that church rules are not important; but I say that every child ought to be instructed in the difference between those rules which are made by men for their own convenience, and those principles on which God's everlasting judgment stands, around about which human character is built up, which enters into the very structure of society, and can not be violated without setting the peace of society at naught, and prejudicing the welfare of the individual. And yet, how many persons are from day to day

allowed to indulge in envy, and avarice, and ill-temper, and all manner of wicked feelings, that strike at the very root of love, which is the law of God, and the law of the universe, without being rebuked, and made to feel that they are delinquent in the matter of rectitude! And how often is it the case that persons, if they violate a saint's day, or do not read just so much, or are not in their places at prayers, or do not do this or that conventional thing, are charged with violation of duty, or with committing sin! And so, their idea of sins is, that they are peccadillos. They have a superstitious notion of what is sinful. As the young grow up without knowing what wrong is, or how to rectify the mischief, they too often break through all bounds of moderation, and say, "I do not believe in sinfulness; I do not believe in any danger such as we are warned of. This kind of teaching will do very well for the nursery, it will answer for children, and may scare them; but I am too much of a man to be frightened any longer at the idea of sin."

Conventional sins are held up before men as representing sinning, until there comes up a scepticism of the whole doctrine and the whole sad and melancholy experience of sinning.

I hold that while for our convenience it is necessary that we should have artificial rules, there are great principles of character and conduct which were created with the creation of the world itself, the violation of which infixes penalties in every heart and in every life, and from which no man ever escapes. There are self-registering sins. There are sins which carry in their own nature an outcome of mischief that lowers the tone of life, and lowers the susceptibility of happiness, multiplying the causes of vexation, and care, and trial, and trouble, following the mind with misrule, and preparing it for the stumblings and the downfalls that come later in life, as the inevitable result of sins that are not forgiven. Such sins do not wait for men to find out and punish them. God has bound his universe together in such a way, and given to his laws such vitality and self-defending power, that any man who sins against his conscience, against his own inward nature, or against the essential welfare of society, gets it back double and quadruple, in his own soul; and that, whether men find it out or not, or whether or not he recognizes the source of those troubles and sufferings which afterwards come upon him. The absolute universality of moral law, and the inevitableness of moral penalty, is one of the most wholesome, though one of the most neglected, of all doctrines.

Again, men are made presumptuous in sinning because they see wicked men prospering. They regard that as the refutation of half the preaching, and of almost all the advice they hear. This is a fatal delusion which has destroyed thousands, and will snare and lead to destruction other thousands yet. Men do not believe that illicit courses

are dangerous, because they see that others who have pursued them are prospered. Men do not believe that the indulgence of appetites is destructive of all true happiness in the end, because they have seen men who seemed really to enjoy themselves, though they had done these very things. They do not believe that untruth, if it is skillfully used, is a dangerous thing. They do not believe that dishonesty is dangerous, if it is only not vulgar, or if there is art and skill in it. They do not doubt that men can thrive on dishonesty. They do not believe there is any necessity that a man should obey the great law of equivalents—that law which requires that a man should render some fair equivalent for everything which he gains, as the condition of enjoying and holding it. They do not believe in any such thing. They point on every side to examples, saying, "Is there any man who is less a Christian than these? And yet, look at their estate. See how men do them reverence. They have more than heart could wish. Their eyes stand out with fatness." Men see their fellows pursuing bad courses in life apparently unchecked; and they say, "Sin is not punished; and what you call evil courses are not dangerous."

In regard to this, I have to say, first, that this is but a superficial view of the prosperity of these men who are thriving by wicked ways. I do not believe, for one, that that man is prosperous who is not happy. Suppose a man were to have the gout, and the neuralgia, and the rheumatism, besides some fever and dropsy, and several other diseases, do you believe it would be possible to put him in circumstances where he would be a prosperous man? Suppose you gave him a thousand ships; suppose you gave him a thousand acres of land; suppose you gave him harvests that could not be weighed nor counted; suppose you piled up his wealth, could there be anything that would be an equivalent for his condition, as he lay curled up, shrunk and shriveled on one side, and expanded and swelled out on the other, vibrating through fiery suffering and pain? I say nay. You would say nay. But you often see men who attempt to gain wealth at the poles, or under the equator, when everybody knows that they will purchase it at the expense of a broken constitution, and come home unfitted to enjoy it; but they do not believe it will be so. If you could bring men where they would see all this waste and all these penalties in their bodies on the one side, and wealth on the other side, and you should ask them, "Will you be rich?" I think the great majority would hesitate about choosing riches. They want wealth, but they would not take it at that price.

Now, what that is to the body, I firmly believe wicked courses are to the soul. I do not believe that a man ever prospers in this world who violates the law of temperance, or the law of God in the great

matter of purity. I do not believe that man who is careless of his word, and careless of his deeds, and who violates the law of equity and justice, is ever a happy man. I do not believe that man who thinks more of property and power and ambition than he does of rectitude and purity and refinement, is ever paid for his sacrifice of moral principle. If you could look into the minds of those men who pursue wrong courses, and see how little enjoyment there really is there, in spite of this outward show, and glitter, and ostentation, and power and royalty, you would see that although there is an outward prosperity, it is a prosperity which has in it infinite sadness.

There is no course that it is worth a man's while to pursue which does not make him happy. The reason men pursue courses that are wrong, is, that they believe they will be made happier; that they will reap greater pleasure. And if you could show that these wrong courses in men make them, not happy, but wretched, their example would be disarmed of half of its mischief.

I verily believe that men who prosper by wickedness lose their capacity of enjoyment; so that there are thousands and thousands of overswollen prosperous men who are not one-tenth as happy as the men who have almost nothing. Why, there are poor working men in yonder city with such pitiful stipends that they can scarcely make the ends meet, who are yet a great deal happier than the millionaire whom they serve. There are men that have gone through the prosperity of what is called secular things in this world, who look out enviously, and sometimes almost sadly, upon the swart laborer, and say, "Oh! if I had no more anxiety than he has; if I could whistle and sing as he does; if I had his lungs, and such arms as he has; if I were as happy as he is, I think I would be willing to give up all my wealth." Oh! the heart-aching cares, the rust and biting, the envies and jealousies, the competitions and rivalries, the attritions, of a life keyed in the lower range of the human faculties! These miseries belong to such men; and if you could look into them you would not be deceived, nor seduced, nor persuaded to take their place.

But that is not all. We are not accustomed to follow men's lives clear through. We glance at them, and see what we can by simply looking upon their outward estate; but we do not wait to see their end. The Psalmist said that he was a fool because he did not wait long enough to see the end of wicked men, and know what became of them. Thousands are dazzled by the glitter of witty, dashing, refined young men who are entering life. These young men know life in all its parts. They know everybody and everything in it. They are brilliant young men. The callow and inexperienced youth is ashamed of himself because he is not expert in the things which

these young men are versed in. He is ashamed because he never did do any dirty things. He is ashamed because he never was willing to drink. He is ashamed because his vocabulary of oaths is such a poor one. He is ashamed that he does not swear. He really feels bad about it. He seems to think that he is a poor white-livered creature because he is not like these dashing blades who command the admiration of silly women and foolish men. But these very young men by whom he is thus dazzled shall not live out half their days. They are brilliant; but it is doubtful whether many of them will see fifty years. More than two-thirds of them will begin to grow old prematurely. Not a few of them will be wrinkled, broken down, bankrupt in reputation, ruined, almost before they reach man's estate. Some of them will die just when they ought to be entering upon active lives of usefulness. And many of those that live might as well be dead, they will be such wretched, miserable creatures—mere fragments of men, groping, crawling through life. Oh! how many men I have seen that were formal enough, that were proper enough, that were very slow and cautious, who, if they saw the young running after enjoyment, sat, and with a ghastly smile, said, "I used to be one of those young men. I had a time of it when I was young." I should think so, judging from what is left of you now that you are old! I can point you to men out of whom all the sap is gone, whose marrow was early consumed, because they kept five hundred wicks burning at once, and used themselves up in their youth. And now that they have come to old age, what is the matter with them? Why is it that they hem and cough? They were once well, but now they are in "ill health," as they say. Where did that ill health come from? They were once very wealthy. They will tell you that they were not always as poor as they are now. What has become of their property? They squandered it. How came they to squander it? Poor, miserable, starving creatures they are, destroyed in body and mind and reputation; and they talk as though they came to their present state of uselessness and contempt by misfortune. It was the misfortune of squandering their youth, instead of filling it up. If a man sin against his own soul and body, and against God, and against the laws of morality in society, it is a misfortune, to be sure, but it is a misfortune for which he alone is responsible. It is a misfortune; but it is the misfortune of his not using common sense and moral sense.

Go see the other end. Stand with me and look into the brilliant saloon. Ye that have seen what young men do up at Delmonico's, go and see what they do down at Flatbush. Ye who have seen the wine when it gave its color in the cup, and who revel through the late hours

again and again, from winter to winter, until you are worn out, why do not you visit your old relations in Greenwood? There they are. Go see where these things end. Did you ever keep an account; or do you just look and see what you do see for the moment, and, without reason or statistics, go headlong to destruction?

There is a law of everlasting rectitude. There are conditions on which men's bodies will serve them happily, and there are conditions on which men's souls will serve them happily. But if a man violate these conditions, no matter how secretly, no matter how little, just as sure as there is a God in heaven he must suffer the penalty. Every one of the wrongs which a man commits against his own soul will find him out, and administer its own penalty.

But there comes a time when men who are not actually worn out by excess of transgression do regain, to some extent, their moral sense. After this period of infatuation there comes, very frequently, a period of retrospection. It is that which is alluded to in the text which I have selected:

"And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me! I was almost in all evil, in the midst of the congregation."

How many there are who have come to that! Whatever may be the impunity with which men sin at the first, and whatever may be the godlessness of their conscience, there comes a time when they are, to a greater or less degree, sensible of the reality of their transgressions, and of the penalty which God fixes upon the transgressor. Sometimes, when the consequences of wrong begin to unfold, men come to their moral sense. There are those who never, after once or twice, have a pang because they are living a life of infidelity to their employers. They are deliberately defrauding. They are stealing, and lying to cover it. It cost them a little suffering at first. The beginnings of wrong courses are painful. But it is said that the sensibility in having a limb taken off is in the skin mainly; that when the skin is cut all round the pain is not so severe. And in transgression the skin is sensitive; men suffer at first; then they go on with comparatively little feeling. When a man has begun to appropriate, and borrow, and speculate, and make false entries, he feels very little until the disclosure comes. A man has carried on such a course for two years, perhaps, and lost no sleep. He has been unhappy sometimes, but has not suffered very much. By and by the time of disclosure comes, and, to his own amazement, there comes a resurrection of moral sensibility which he never dreamed of. His conscience has been slumbering; and it was not till the consequences of his evil conduct stared

him in the face, it was not until the law threatened him with public exposure and shame, that he had a conception of the full extent of the wickedness he had committed.

You shall find men in jail who are profoundly affected, who are whelmed in sorrow, who throw themselves down upon despair itself; and yet until they were incarcerated nothing troubled them, though they were doing all the wrongs that a man could well commit. There are many persons in whom conscience is not strong enough, and not educated enough to report, until some auxiliary feeling, such as shame, or pride, or fear, or affection, comes in to aid it, and give it tone and intensity.

So men who do wrong, often, as long as it is secret, do not feel that it is wrong; but the moment shame begins to hiss at them they begin to be shot through with real pangs of conscience. There are men who, though they have done wrong again and again and again, are not troubled by it until they learn that their wife and children are to find it out. Then they say, "Kill me, do anything to me, but do not let it go back to my family." Their cry is enough to pierce the heavens; and they say, "Woe is me!" And the thing which drives conscience home like a fury upon them, is the thought, "It is going to be made known to those whom I love, and it will ruin my children."

Here is a man who is doing wicked things; looking on the face of his children does not restrain him; beholding the venerable form of his father and mother, by whose example he yet hopes to go to heaven, does not restrain him; but by-and-by a disclosure comes, and he is brought into disgrace, and he is to go home and face his friends, and it rends his soul.

This is another instance in which the moral sense requires an auxiliary emotion to make it work; but at last the man's conscience is found. His reason did not find it. His reflections did not awaken it. His love did not stimulate it. All the ordinary motives did not inspire it. But when shame and disgrace came upon him, it developed at last this latent feeling of conscience.

Oh! if men could have as lively a conscience before they sin, as after they have been exposed in sin, how it would stand at the gate of transgression and ward men off!

So, too, men come to a moral sensibility by those various circumstances which render the moral sense finer, or which bring home upon them the rule of right in a clearer way.

You will recollect how, when Job had gone through all his wrestlings with his companions, and he came at last into the hands of God, the controversy was wound up, and how he said,

"Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak; I will demand of thee, and

declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

What was it that befel Job? He had such a conception of the purity and holiness of God, and of the divine law, that his moral sense was lifted up immeasurably higher than it had ever been before; and in that heightened moral tone he saw himself to be as the dust and dirt under his feet.

It pleases God sometimes to come upon men who have been living lives of high-handed wickedness. He quickens their moral sense. That is done sometimes by afflictions. I have known men reformed from bad courses by great domestic afflictions. God accepted as a sacrifice their darlings, and brought them into a state of sensibility in which they developed their lives very differently from the way in which they had ever developed them before. When thus the truth is brought home to wicked men's lives, they have such a conception of God's law, of his judgment, of his royalty, and of his presence in human affairs, that they cannot think of themselves or their conduct as they did before. Sometimes it is sickness; sometimes it is bankruptcy; sometimes it is the loss of the respect of men. Many things may act in a way to increase the sensibility of a man's moral sense; and that very moment he passes to a different judgment of his conduct.

But sometimes it is too late. I have known men who looked back on their youth, and said, "I would give all the world if I could wipe out ten years of my early life." I have known men to mourn, and say, "Why, I have misled scores of young men!" I have known men to say, "I have destroyed innocence and purity. I did not think of it or care about it at the time, but I see the horrible wickedness of it now, and my soul is full of dark regrets." It is too late. I have known men who, during a certain portion of their business life, were as greedy as a shark, and as merciful. I have known men who rent and destroyed those round about them. I have known those who made wealth by the most outrageous cruelties. I have known men who carried their avarice to dishonesty. But after they had passed through a certain period, it pleased God to intone their conscience, and give them a higher moral feeling; and they looked back and sat in judgment upon themselves, abhored themselves in dust and ashes, and would, if they could, have made atonement of all they had amassed. But it was too late. They could not retrace their steps. The men whom they had wronged were scattered. The circumstances were all changed. The things remained that they had earned. But their moral sensibility had become so new that they judged very differently of themselves.

How many men have perverted the principles of young men!

How many men have misled the young in their faith, and sent them into infidelity! And afterwards they have themselves become subjects of saving grace. And how on their souls lay as a burden the fact that they had been the cause of leading others astray! and how they imposed upon themselves penalties, and sought to make reparation for the mischief they had done, by active labors for men! But it was too late. It is better late than never; but with what mourning! with what sorrow!

If wicked men do not come to their full punishment in this life, they come to much pain, frequently. They come to a moral sensibility of the harm that wrong inflicts. And there is to come a time when no man shall escape. There is to come a time when no deed done in the body shall be without its history; when every wrong word, and every wrong thought, and every wrong feeling, shall rise up in judgment against us. We shall be required to give an account of all the deeds done in the body. There is to be a day of reckoning. There is a judgment day in the bones, and in the nerves, and in the stomach. There is a judgment day in the heart and in the brain. But besides the judgment day in this life, there is to be a day of reckoning when God shall confront men with his own holiness, and the grandeur of his purity, and bring before them their recorded lives, and every man shall see what he has done in the body, and shall give an account of himself, before the assembled universe, to his God. And oh! if then, if *then*, though one be mightily oppressed with a sense of sinfulness, he can see that the sin has been repented of and forsaken, and that his whole heart has been turned from it, how blessed will be that day! But if one comes with his sins upon his head, and his life stained with them, and his heart corrupted by them; if he comes with his whole being perverted and gnarled by selfishness, and avarice, and hatred, and the other passions of his lower nature, how wretched will be his lot!

When Pilate washed his hands, and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just man," the crowd, with the rulers at their head, cried out, saying, "On us, and on our children, be his blood." And they had their way. A few months rolled around, and the same disciples who had companied with Christ, in that same Jerusalem, began, with mighty and wondrous power from on high, to preach this Christ who had then gone above; and the whole city was shaken. And the rulers seized them. And then, when they began to feel the terrors of affliction coming upon them, they said not a word. They were determined to bring this man's blood on the heads of others. Ah! when they wanted their own way, they were willing to take the risk of blood; but when they

had their own way, and the blood began to come down upon them, they cried out against it.

There is many a man that takes a wicked course in life, saying, "I will take the consequences;" but when the consequences come, they would fain avoid them. But it cannot be. And how much worse if the evil of it is deferred to the other land, and one stands in the precinct of heaven, beholds the light and the glory, hears afar off the sweet and refreshing sound, sees far above him the poor whom he despised on earth, and far below him those who on earth were crowned, and when he says, "Lord, open unto me," hears a voice in tones to which thunder would be as music, say, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity!"

There is such a thing as sin; and there is danger in sin—danger to the body; danger to the understanding; danger to the affections; danger to the taste and the imagination; danger to the conscience; danger in this life; and, above all, most appalling danger in the life that is to come. For, as a man dies, so shall he rise again. As he leaves this world, so he starts in the other. If he is environed with evil habits, if he is filled full of sins and transgressions, that is the capital with which he begins in the life that is to come.

I beseech of you, my young friends, so many of you as have come down hither, not to be misled by the vain show of the world into which you are introduced. I beseech of you who have come hither recently, and are already beginning, in the place where you are, to be ashamed of your Bibles, and are forgetting the promises which you made to your mothers, and the vows which you made to yourselves, do not suffer yourselves to be snared. Surely, in vain is the fowler's snare set in the sight of the bird; but these snares are set right in your sight, and you put your foot in them, and are caught.

I beseech of you, believe in virtue; believe in truth; believe in honesty and fidelity; believe in honor; believe in God; believe in God's law and in God's providence. Put your trust in God, and in the faith of God, and not in the seeming of deceitful and apparently prosperous men. Let no man witch your soul from you; let no man dazzle your understanding from you; let no man by any sinuous courses draw you aside from that straight and narrow way where there is safety. And whatever else you get, have peace, every day, with your own conscience. Whoever else you offend, do not offend your God. Keep him on your side. Do what is right, and then fear no man. Do what is right, and trust in God, and all the world cannot hurt you. Neither time, nor death, nor eternity can harm those who follow the light that God throws upon their path. And for all imperfections trust to his gracious and forgiving love.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Thou ever-blessed God, our souls rejoice in thee. We rejoice in thee by the morning and by the evening. In every season, in sorrow, in prosperity, under all experiences of life, we find thee to be our strength, and peace, and joy. Thou canst make up to us in thine own presence, all our outward losses. What time we are willing to renounce everything that separates us from thee, and take thee as our covenant portion, we find that we are lifted up by thy presence, and by thy power blessed supremely. Nor is it needful that we should have the favor of men, nor that we should have the strength of riches, nor even that we should stand in all the enjoyments of love; for thou canst bless sickness itself. Thou canst make poverty full of riches. Thou canst give us in our solitude the sense of divine company. Thou canst grant even when all the world is dark to us, the light of that other world in overmeasure, and perfectly, so that death is robbed of its terror, and afflictions and disappointments no longer have dominion over us. By thy spirit we are able to rise above all things, and to count it joy when we fall into divers trials. We rejoice in afflictions and infirmities, that the honor of God may be made manifest in us.

Oh! how great is the wonder of that grace which thou hast shown us in our ordinary experience! Grant us to be crowned, though unknown, as the very sons of God.

We rejoice, O God, in the past manifestations which thou hast made of thyself; in the blessedness of that experience which enables so many to be witnesses for Christ. What thou hast done for us in some measure we know; and yet, in greater measure it is to be revealed hereafter. But we know that we have in a thousand ways been sustained, and comforted, and strengthened, and enriched, and guarded, and defended, when our own helplessness was set upon by great and grievous evils. Thou, O God, hast set thine angels to guard us. We have been lifted up by thee and borne over the difficulties. And we rejoice in thy faithfulness. And we desire to walk evermore under the protection of thy wing. We desire so to live that we can have access to thee and put our trust in thee from day to day. Deliver us from the power of temptation, from pride, from selfishness, from all inordinate passions: from every envious and jealous and wicked way. Purify our hearts. Grant that they may become as temples of the living God. Dwell thou in us, that all our feelings may be sweet, and all our thoughts right, and every affection pure; that we may seek the best things, for men and among men, and seek earthly things evermore as strangers and pilgrims looking up and beyond for our true home. Grant that our Father's house may send down welcomes to us all along the way, by which we are traveling toward it. May we see thy messengers. May we accept their gifts and glorify God.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that our life may encourage others to live in all true faith. Grant that the power of Christ may be manifested in the awakening of men; in bringing them from evil ways; in changing their lives; in bringing them to the Prince and the Saviour. Grant that there may be great turning from wickedness. May men be reformed from evil habits. May men be turned away from the things which perish in the using, and from those things which defile them and make them unworthy of themselves, unworthy of their divine parentage, unworthy of thy favor, unsafe, wretched here, and wretched hereafter. Deliver those that are thralled in the snare laid for the innocent.

We beseech thee that thou wilt guide all that are young. Teach them early integrity. May they know how to be truthful, honest and faithful; how to be industrious and frugal; how to prosper in this life without breaking the law of God. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt enable those that are gathering strength in outward abundance, to consecrate all that they

have to the service of God. And may they not live to build themselves up in selfishness. May they learn that their happiness is in beneficence. And we pray that thou wilt grant that we, and the generation of men who are springing up from out of our midst, may be more earnest, more spiritual, more truly benevolent, more self-denying and more Christ-like than we have been.

And we pray that thou wilt bless all the Churches in this city, and thy dear servants that are preaching thy Gospel. And we pray thee that thou wilt correct whatever errors fall out; and that thou wilt multiply the number of those that are spreading the truth, and bless abundantly their ministrations. Unite the people together more and more. And we pray that they may join hands, and go on together. Since there is so wide-spread iniquity, and since the causes of evil are working hard, grant that all thy people may lay aside jealousies and dissensions, and be united together in mutual confidence, and live in the faith of God, and go forward from conquering to conquer.

Let thy kingdom come everywhere. Fill the earth with thy glory.
And to thy name shall be the praise, forevermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our heavenly Father, we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the words of exhortation and warning which we have spoken. We beseech of thee that thou wilt take care of those that are inexperienced; of those that are tempted; of those that are partly led away. Look upon any that are thralled. Look upon any that have tasted and found the bitterness and deceitfulness of sin, and that fain would come back again. Oh! be gentle with them. Oh! be patient with them. Dear Saviour, teach us to be gentle. Teach us how to bring them back again.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt inspire hope in any that are despairing; in any that think they have lived too long in sin, and thrown away all their opportunities. O Lord God! we pray that the age of hope may dawn upon their minds, and that they may not count themselves appointed for destruction. Who can be banished from thee? Who can lose heaven? We cannot give thee up. Do not thou give us up.

Lord God of our fathers, hear the prayers that have been uttered for us. Give us better minds. Bring us back to thee and loyalty. And grant, we beseech of thee, that there may be many in this congregation whose hearts shall be touched to night, and whose consciences shall be wounded. May the voice of God be heard in the silent and secret passages of their souls. Speak to them, and bring them back from sin. And grant, we pray thee, that, by the power of the Holy Ghost, there may be many hearts cleansed, and many sins forgiven. and newness of life given to many.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

THE SUFFICIENCY OF JESUS.

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."—HEB. XII., 2.

The Epistle to the Hebrews, which for a long time was ascribed to the apostle Paul, but which, it seems to me, no man who ever felt what Paul's style was could for a moment believe that he wrote—for as near as I can recollect, the word *I* does not appear in the Epistle to the Hebrews once from beginning to end, and it is simply impossible that Paul should have written as much as that and not brought in *I* a hundred times; the Epistle to the Hebrews, which the best modern scholarship is now more and more ascribing to Apollos, mighty in Scripture, presents (although through the medium of the old Jewish ideas, and therefore comparatively to the Jewish want) the noblest aspect of the hopeful side of God which is contained, perhaps, in any of the Epistles of the New Testament. It contains, not, perhaps, more that touches us, but more that would have touched the educated imagination of a truly spiritual Jew, than any other one of all the Epistles. And the view given of Christ, of God as represented by Christ, all the way through, is full of the tenderest encouragement and of the greatest beauty.

In that portion from which we have selected our text, the writer had been discussing the matter of faith, meaning by that the higher exercise of the moral faculties of the mind; or, living, not by the animal economy, and by the animal passions, but by the reason and the moral sentiments, whose action is always in a sphere higher than that of sense, or of matter.

From the earliest age, there had been those who had lived more or less perfectly by this nobler conception of life, and in the presence of invisible things. And although it was not a life that could compare with that of those who live now, or who have lived since that time, we are to remember that, in the early day, the disclosures of truth were very limited, and that, to live as Abraham did, as the patriarchs did, and as the prophets did, required far more faith than to live in that wise in

SUNDAY MORNING, Sept. 25, 1870. The first service after the Summer vacation. LESSON HEB. XII., 1–25. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection), 514, 247.

our day, when so much more has been given to us. This conviction of spiritual truth had held men in all past times, the writer says, to the highest achievements of humanity. They had borne; they had suffered; they had achieved wonders: and all by this power of faith—this sense of truth invisible.

He then goes on to sum up and marshal the eminent names of the ages, one by one. He recounts their principal achievements. And when the last is completed, or rather summarized in the end, when the hearers are full of these venerable associations, he declares that the shadows of all these noble spirits overhang them, and are spectators of their strife. All those who, gathered out of the thousands of years preceding, had gone home to glory, waited, as it were, on the threshold of heaven, on the borders of that land, to look out upon us, and upon those of every age who are making the same fight which they made. They watch the progress of the conflict, and wait till, one after another, all that are called come through to their victory. And they, too, in turn, become spectators, as it were, in sympathy, and participants again in the same strife in others which they had victoriously waged.

In this august assembly, the highest name of all sufferers is the name of Jesus. He, too, is looking upon our life struggle; he, too, with all that have gone before from among men, is watching those who are coming along on this road. He is presented to us, not as watching from curiosity; not as watching merely from enthusiasm.

On the heights above Sedan, during that terrific conflict, there were two watchers. One, Sheridan, our own man, watched with all the enthusiasm of a warrior; but in the vast host before him it is not probable that there was one person in whose veins his blood beat. Right by his side King William watched; and there were both of his sons leading parts of that gigantic army. And though both of them—the king and the general—were warriors and watchers, the *king's heart* was in his eye. His was, therefore, the outlook, not merely of generalship, but of paternal love as well.

Now, Christ is watching, from heaven, those in whom his heart is, and in whom his blood is. He is watching paternally, and not merely as a spectator would watch in the excitement of a contest.

This presentation of Jesus is not on that side where the divine attributes mostly are brought out. We know only so much of God as can be likened to something corresponding to Him in man; and therefore it is that by searching we shall never find out the Almighty to perfection. That which is distinct from man is unknown and unknowable. That which, as it were, is the beginning, or elementary part, of the divine nature, is so like man, that, being made in the image

of God, we can understand it; but, going on, we soon lose company. For that which is peculiarly and distinctively divine as separate from all human parallel or likeness, we have no means of understanding. That goes on beyond comprehension. It is not that part of the divine nature, therefore, which the writer attempts to set forth, but only that part which, in the Bible, is likened to something in man. This has been much objected to by philosophers and theologians—*anthropomorphism*, as it is called, or the likening of God to man. But to deny this mode of representation is substantially to destroy the possibility of knowing God, and is to make atheism the only possible ground on which man can stand. More, perhaps, than any other part of the New Testament, the Epistle to the Hebrews develops the tender and sympathetic side of God's nature, as represented in Christ. Hence, in Christ, the throne of Government is represented as filled, not so much by law, not so much by penalty, not so much by rigor, not so much by power and authority, as by the sympathy of love. He came, not for judgment, but for mercy, and in consonance with this view which he proclaims of himself all the way through the writings of the apostles. While they did not ignore law and government, they predominatingly represented Christ as the presentation of God's law of love and mercy to the world. Law underlies everything. We do not need to prove that. It is the organic law of creation. It exists. We know that, because it is constantly falling upon us—or we upon it. Men stumble over it all the time, on every side, and every day. There is no need, therefore, of vindicating law. It takes care of itself. A release from transgressed law is that which needs to be advocated and to be made plain. Sympathy and helpfulness on the divine side toward those who have broken law, and have set at naught the divine government—this is the necessity; and this is that which the apostle—or the writer, if it be Apollos—here chiefly does. He presents a view of God in marked contrast with the heathen notion. For, although there were traits of excellence, the general idea of the heathen gods was that of an essential monarch, with a concentrated selfishness of purpose, and with arbitrary power for the accomplishment of results. The view of God presented after the revelation in Jesus Christ, is a view of divine mercy, divine sympathy, and divine helpfulness. And it is toward this that we are commanded to look in every time of need.

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame; and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

When we are in trouble, whatever that trouble may have arisen from—whether from sin, or from conscience, or from affection, or from remorse, or from bereavement—the command is, *Look to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith*—not to Jehovah,

if by *Jehovah* you mean the God of law; not to God, as administering penalty; but to Jesus, who stands, to the universal human heart, as the representative of recovering mercy. We are to look to pity, to sympathizing sorrow, in the hand of God. In every trouble, and in every temptation of trouble, look to that side of the divine nature —not at the clouds; not at the mountain that burned with fire; not at that which was clothed with darkness, and out of which thunder spoke. That was the older dispensation. The same writer, in the same chapter, which I read in the opening service, said,

"Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven."

In other words, we are come to that side of the divine nature which represents rescue, release, recovery, salvation, and eternal joy. All through the chapter, it is, "In your struggle of life, watched by ten thousand witnesses, who have been through life as you have been, and are now safe, look to Jesus for rescue. Look not to the terrible side of the divine government, but to the merciful side. Look to Him who has been tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin—a merciful High-priest who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities; who has suffered in our stead, that we might not suffer." We are commanded to look to that aspect of the divine government in all our trouble.

If this be the representation which is made, it presents a use for Christ of the most practical character; and it is the practical side of this exhortation to which I mainly shall address myself this morning.

In view of this exhortation I remark,

1. Those who feel no need of Christ; those who never are impelled to look to Him; those who have no conscious dependence upon Him, are, according to the teaching of this Scripture, disowned of God, and are bastards. In other words, the condition in which we find ourselves in this world, is one which begins with imperfections, and imperfections which lead inevitably to sins of one kind and another. The world has racked its brains to understand how sin entered the world; and theories and explanations without end have been put forth; but I understand sin to be simply the ignorance of men as to how to carry the faculties which they have in them—not merely their ignorance, but in connection with that ignorance the want of that moral development which shall enable them to carry all parts of their soul skilfully, harmoniously, and rightly. Sin, therefore, regarded as the outworking of the imperfection of this system, came in with the coming in of creation itself. You cannot create men at the seminal point. It being the problem of the universe to develop a race of creatures, step by step, to the very highest point, it is utterly impossible that

there should be such a system instituted in the world as that human beings should be wise from the beginning. We have the problem of the introduction of sin in our own families, every one of us. Our children are born, not men, but babies. They are born ignorant, and inexpert. Every boy and every girl has to learn, through years, to think and to feel, and the laws of thinking and feeling. Every child studies about his foot, and hand, and eye, and every sense, all through his nature; and the household shields him, and economizes his mistakes so as to educate him, and bring him up so that he shall know how to use himself. That is only over again in the family just the same thing that took place on the grand scale of the whole world. All the race was born in infancy; and, as a child finds his way through inexperience, so the race find their way through inexperience. And sins are simply the faults which fall out from the want of knowledge, and from the want of motive-power to do the things which are right in men.

Now, this want of experience, this want of knowledge, this inequality of faculty, this jar and conflict, this discord, is universal. There is not a man born, and there never was a man born, who knew how to carry himself so as not to go into moral discords.

Men do not like the term *total depravity*. Nor do I; and I never use it. And I do not like the thing itself. But you might as well expect to find a man born a hundred years old, as to expect to find a man born without a depraved nature. When you shall find me a child knowing all arithmetic at one year old, expert in all music at one year old, a universal historian at one year old, an athlete at one year old, full of all temporal wisdom at one year old, then, and not before, I will find you another child that is born into this world expert in all virtue, in all truth, in all moral purity, in all upward tendencies. The fact is, men are born at the lowest point of the scale, and work their way up through cycles of inexperience and mistakes and transgressions to the highest point. And it is not a slander to say that men are depraved, unless it be a slander to say that this is the method of the divine creation, or that this is the way that the world is organized. If there be one truth that shall stand and burn after all theologies shall have passed away, or shall have changed, it is this truth of universal decrepitude, universal weakness in good, or universal imperfection, running, in adult states, to transgressions, and becoming sinful, so that every man in the race, with every particular faculty of his nature, sins, has sinned, and continues to sin. There is such a thing as universal sinfulness,—if you prefer that phrase to *universal depravity;* choose your own language, so that you do not escape from the mournful, melancholy fact that the whole race is sinful.

Now, for a man to stand contented in this moral state is as igno-

minious in the sight of God, and a thousand times more so, as in our sight it is for one to be ignorant in secular affairs. It is a stigma upon a man, unless he is a foreigner, to say that he cannot read and write. We always make a distinction in judgment if we know that a man has come from abroad, where he has had no opportunities for instruction, and where he has been subjected to squalid poverty and brute oppression. We excuse a man's ignorance under such circumstances. But for a native-born American, north of Mason's and Dixon's line, not to be able to read and write, is a disgrace that marks him out in the whole village, and throughout all the neighborhood. Secular ignorance is a disgrace among men. And as moral excellence is greater than mere intellectual and secular excellence, so moral ignorance is greater than intellectual or secular ignorance; and contentment in it is degrading and unmanly.

Any man, then, who, being sinful before God, and coming short in every faculty and part of his nature, aspires to rise out of that state, and come to a higher experience, and attempts it, very soon feels his need of a schoolmaster, and of a schoolmaster, not that has a rod, but that has kindness. Every man who has aspiration, and who feels that he must grow in nobleness, in purity, in self-government, in beneficence, in every element of a true manhood, comes to feel that such growth requires that there shall be something to help him from above.

Here, the clouds gather so soon about us, we become discouraged so soon, we are so little able to be our own models, we fall into such biases and into such temptations, that if we have not some shining mark before us, we soon grow into forgetfulness or discouragement. Therefore it is that we have the pattern man, Jesus Christ—God represented in the spirit of man; therefore it is that we have the divine attributes presented in the form of human faculties and experiences. And we are commanded to look to him in this life struggle, in this work of education, and of emancipation from lower stages into a higher condition. *Look to Jesus.*

There are many who are content, however, with simply a development into the society idea. So that they have health, and position in life, that satisfies them. I have heard men of excellent parts in other things saying that they see no use of heaven; that this world is good enough for them. Since then I have seen their cradle turned bottom-side up. Since then I have seen their till emptied. Since then I have seen them making settlement of bankrupt estates. Since then I have seen their names cast out, and them hunted. It is a very different thing, in the beginning of life, to say that the world is good enough for you, from what it is at the end of life. When they have gone through from first to last, and taken the good or evil of life, few men

say that. Few men who have come to gray hairs utter any such nonsense as "This world is good enough for me." Of any man who says that, God says, "He is not a child; he is a bastard."

If in this life you endure chastening; if you have those little struggles which bring you in conflict with your various surroundings, so that you are pressed down with disappointments and trials, which are God's chastisements upon you, it is a sign that you are ambitious; it is a sign that you want to rise to a higher estate; it is a sign that you are a son of God. This ambition to be something high is a sign of nobility. But if you have no struggles, it is a sign that you are not carrying yourself against anything. And if you are not, it is because you are torpid and stupid, and not noble, and therefore are not a son of God.

"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

God will not own you if you have not experienced suffering.

We are not to interpret this so as to exclude providential troubles; but the accent and emphasis is not to be on the thought that God deals with us as with sons, when he deals with us by providential afflictions. All the struggles which come from the desire of man to emancipate himself from the lower conditions of life; all those conflicts which grow up in a man who is determined in his heart to repress inordinate pride, and beat down vanity, and restrain lust, and make a new man of himself—they are the chastisements of God. And the laying on of these sufferings is an indication that God perceives that you are striving for the higher life. He is dealing with you, therefore, in all helpfulness, as with a child. But if you have none of these things, God sees that you are not his son. The want of suffering, and strife, and sorrow, and penitence, and despondency, and aspiration, and yearning, indicates that you are ignoble, and out of the divine family.

Hence, they who pity men that suffer a great deal about their religion, are themselves to be pitied. That is the condition of thousands of persons who look upon church-members as pitiable. Many of *them* are pitiable. There are persons who look upon all that are seeking a religious life as pitiable, because they do not have liberty; because they are tied up; because they cannot enjoy the world as worldlings do. But I affirm the contrary—that no man can or does enjoy so much of this world as that man who is aiming to prepare himself for the kingdom of God's glory. The religion of Jesus Christ is not ascetic, nor sour, nor gloomy, nor circumscribing. It is full of sweetness in the present, and in promise; and the only suffering which it entails is such suffering as the liar experiences in learning to tell the truth. Do you

not think it is worth while for a dishonest man to suffer for the sake of being honest? He loses a great many chances, to be sure. I can understand how a reformed pickpocket, passing by a pompous man, and seeing his pompous watch on his pompous belly, might say, "I remember the time when I would have had that;" and it is a self-denial to him. But do not you think that a pickpocket on the way to virtue is a great deal happier than a man that would steal?

These are low illustrations and familiar instances; but the principle is the same when a man is endeavoring to become like Jesus Christ, and to gain a higher conception of character and manhood, and finds obstacles in his way, such as pride and lust. He has, we will suppose, a battle with pride and lust. And there is the only place where his suffering comes in. He is attempting to live in a community that would laugh down sobriety. He has to stand up against the community and say, "I will not drink though every man that I meet drinks. I will not gamble though all my companions gamble."

Says a man in a frontier settlement who carries his father's integrity with him, "I will be upright and virtuous." And he keeps his resolution. And all his neighbors deride him. And he has to take up his cross. But do you not think that his suffering is overbalanced by the joy which comes from his consciousness that he lives in superior manhood, and is nobler than any one of them? Religion does lay on men some degree of suffering; but it is the suffering of emancipation.

See how a man will work to get out of prison. I remember some stories that I used to read, of how a prisoner turned a knife into a universal tool; how he scraped the mortar, and took out a floor stone, and little by little, day and night, removed the dirt, till finally he had excavated a little chamber; how he carried the dirt and hid it in his bed; how, with curious device, he went down and down until he struck under the foundation of the prison sill; how then he came to the light, and took observation as to where he was coming out; how he found that he was still inside of the high fence; and how he notched the post so that he could climb to the top; and how he tore his blankets and let himself down on the other side, and went free. Thief though he was, liberty was sweet to him. And what suffering he endured; how often he gashed his hands, that he might gain it! He said to himself, "Only let me get out and have my freedom, and I am willing to risk my life."

Now, let a man feel that he is a prisoner to lust, to appetite, to dominant passion, and he says, "I will be free from this," and commences working to get rid of his chains, and burrows, if need be, excavates, to get out of doors, and scales the fence, in order that he may

gain his freedom in a larger and nobler sense than the criminal ever knows it. But the impulse is the same.

What would you say of such a man, if he got out of prison? Would you say that he paid too high a price for his freedom? Or would you say that it was worth all it cost him, though it required some pain-bearing and life-risking to get it?

Religion is got by men who are a great way from it, and they have to take steps to come to it. We employ tears, and sometimes cutting off the right hand and plucking out the right eye; but when once a man has come into the spirit of Christ Jesus, he sees religion for the first time in a new light; and he says of it, "That is not sour nor gloomy. It is triumphant, exultant, victorious peace in this life. It gives me a brighter sun. It gives me a nobler night. It gives me more beauty in all the seasons. It gives me my Father's world, and no longer a smitten world. It gives me things here, and more yet in the world to come. And no man knows how to enjoy the day or the night, the year or the seasons, no man knows how to enjoy secular blessings, so well as he who has victoriously trusted himself in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If, then, you have no need of looking unto Jesus, it is because you are without aspiration; it is because you are degraded; it is because you do not understand either your present condition or the dangers which fall upon you in consequence of it; it is because you have not a touch or taste of the divine nature in your souls. He who has no occasion to look unto Jesus is degraded and vulgar—for vulgarity does not mean poor clothes. Vulgarity means a poor soul. A mean soul in broadcloth is vulgar. A mean man who has a crown on is vulgar; and a pauper with a king's soul in him is royal. He who can live in this life and say, "Husks are good enough for me, and the pigs that I associate with, and that are my companions, are good enough for me; I have no need of looking unto Jesus"—woe be to that man! Woe be to him whose heart does not ring out every day, in every time of need, "Look unto Jesus—*look unto Jesus.*" Woe be to the man who has no time of conscious need.

2. Men, in their life-struggles, are to look to Christ rather than to turn their eyes upon themselves—which is the tendency of men. We are apt to think very little of ourselves, until we begin to attempt to break away from bad habits and evil courses; but then we shoot into the opposite morbid extreme, and think of almost nothing else. It is very true that one must examine himself, and know something of himself; but it does not follow, because we must have a knowledge of our own sinful condition, and so must think about ourselves, that the more we do it the better we are off. It is wise that a man should know himself

to be so sick as to need to see his physician; but the physician says, "Think about your sickness as little as you can." He draws him off from his symptoms as much as possible. And when a man is roused to a sense of sin, and the consequent danger of sin, it is not wise for him to look at himself too much. It is not wise for you to turn your eyes inward too much upon that gulf of the heart which every one of you has in him. We are not to swing round as in an eddy or whirlpool in a dark gorge. We are to look unto Jesus, rather. Every man whose pride is wounded; every man whose vanity is wounded; every man who has been overthrown by lusts; every man whose appetites have carried him away captive; every man who has violated the law of the land and overstepped the bounds of divine law; every man who has gone counter to the dictates of his own conscience, and disobeyed the tribunal of his best thoughts; every man who convicts himself of wickedness, is not to sit and read over and over and over again the sentence of the condemnation that is pronounced against him. God does not think this needful. His command is, *Look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith.*

It is this very moral sensibility that he has begun; and out of this very moral sensibility he will work cure to the world. And the first step for every wholesome nature, when conscious of having done wrong, is not so much to attempt to repair the wrong, is certainly not to go back and chew the bitter cud of memory, ruminating on transgression, but to look unto Jesus, and be forgiven; and then, "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God." That is the command. And it is sensible. It addresses itself to the moral consciousness of every man, and to every man's sense of things fit and right.

And yet, there are many persons who set their life up before them, and look it over, and review it again and again. Sometimes people keep journals; and when a man keeps a journal of his religious experience he never will lack a fool's looking-glass; and he will see himself in it every time, too. If there is one place where the devil is surer to get a man than anywhere else, it is when he is writing his journal. And yet many think they grow in grace by an anatomical process of analyzing their motives. They think about their motives, and they want to discriminate as to what they shall put down; and, generally speaking, a man lies every time he dips his pen into the ink. For although a journal has, in pompous letters, on the outside, "To be read by no one but me, and in case of my death, I enjoin my affectionate friends to burn this manuscript," he knows that these *affectionate friends* will read it, for the same reason that when you see on a door, "No Admittance,"

you are all the more anxious to go in, because you think there is something there worth seeing. And when a man says, "I have a journal that has something in it which I do not want anybody in creation to read," everybody in creation wants to read it, and all creation would not stop you from reading it. And when it is read, it is exaggerated. It is filled with deceptive statements. A man does not choose to gibbet himself on every page of his journal, and tell how wicked a man he is. A man may tell how wicked he is, but not how *mean* he is. And, after all, the meanness is the worst part of wickedness. But that is the thing which does not go down in a journal. Yet there are persons who draw out the long black lines of record, as if it were of any use to them, or to anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath. A journal of a man's morbid economy might better not be kept. You have enough to do with that economy anyhow. It is sufficient that you have experiences growing out of it from hour to hour and from day to day. Cast behind you these things. The sins that you have committed are evil. Do not keep them. Throw them into the draught. Let them sink to the bottom of the sea.

There are men who have committed great sins, and who are like the knight that used to wear sackcloth in order that the scratching might remind him of having, perhaps, murdered his royal master, and who never wanted to forget that he was a murderer. But what is the use of remembering one's crimes? Some set apart days to remind them of the sins of the olden time. They want to keep them in memory. But what is the use of keeping one's sins in memory? You are not the children of night, that you should set up a monument of darkness of this kind. It is not worth a man's while, after he has once escaped, to ponder the things of the olden time. It is not in accordance with New Testament truth, or God's truth, or Christ's truth. Forget, *forget*, FORGET! God promises that he will do it; and he commands you to do it. "I will never make mention again of your transgressions," he says to men. He declares that their sins shall be cast as into the depths of the sea. And why should a man trouble and vex himself about his past sins. Do you suppose you are any better for remembering that which crushes you and fills you with pain? Pain is like emery. If it scours anything that wants to be scoured, it is good. Otherwise it is not good. He who seeks mere pain is an idolator. While the strife and conflict of sin is on you, then look at it and fight it; but when it is past, then throw it away, and forget it. Never look long at yourself, or at the old burnt-out craters in life. Never linger long in the precincts where you have suffered a great deal. You are children of light. Look unto Jesus. Look unto him, as he sitteth above, in the midst of the myriads of those who have been just like

vou; of those who have wept over ten thousand transgressions; of those that overcame their sins at last, and are saved with an everlasting salvation. In their midst, crowned with joy, floral as the summer, Christ sits. And every sinner who mourns over his sins, and would triumph over them, is commanded to look to him. Do not look to yourselves, nor to your sins, but to *Jesus*.

3. Christ is to be sought, not after we have overcome our sins; not after we have gained a victory over our transgressions. In the old lists, or in the Schützen games of the knights, the queen was selected, and she sat in the centre on the upraised seat; and after the knights had made proof of their skill and prowess, and their adversaries were cast down, then the one that had come out conqueror, soiled and weary, and with his armor dashed and dented, came forward, and was crowned by the queen. But he had to go through the conflict first.

A great many think that Christ sits with a coronet in his hand, to crown those who are victorious, after they shall have fought their own battles. And so He does, in one sense. We are to be final victors, and then are to be finally crowned in heaven. But there is a sense in which this is false. That is to say, if you suppose that the condition on which you are to look to Jesus for succor is that you shall overcome your pride; if you say, "I have fallen into habits of self-indulgence, I want to be free, and I would go to God and promise Him that I will reform, only I have been a thousand times, and it has never availed, and I shall fail again, and I dare not go any more until I have some evidence in myself that I shall be able to stand in my own resolution"—then you take a wrong view of this matter. People say, "I would go to God if I felt that I could promise anything, and that I could keep my promise."

That is not it. You are a helpless captive; you are under a tormenting master; and Jesus is your deliverer. And shall not the captive cry out to his deliverer until he has broken his own chains? Are you not sinning every day? Is not sin your master? And while you are sinning are you not an unfortunate soul, carried away captive? And is it not declared that Jesus came to break shackles, to open prison doors, to give sight to the blind, and to give hearing to the deaf? He comes to rescue men. And the time when a man is to look to Jesus most confidingly is when he is in his sins, and when he knows that he will sin again.

Your cup betrayed you to-day, and your cup will betray you to-morrow. You have fallen into self-indulgent pleasures to-day, and you know that you will fall into them to-morrow. You have tried for months, and perhaps years, to get rid of your sins, and you cannot get rid of all of them. You can give up one thing and another that is

wrong, but you cannot give up all wrong things. You cannot help longing to be a better man, and you cannot prevent these evils which spring from the flesh. You are waiting, and hoping that the time will come when you can present yourself as a fit person to join the Church, and when you can present yourself at the table of the Lord, saying, "I have conquered." Oh! it will be a joyful day when you can say that; but you need to go to Christ a great while before then. You need to go to Him to get pity; to get succor; to get inspiration. There is no time when Christ is so needed by a man's soul as when that soul is sinning from day-to-day. That is the time, above all other times, when you need to go to Him.

I used to work out my sums wearily—when I worked them out at all—at my seat, on my slate; and when I had done them, I went to my master to show them to him with some pleasure; but I did not need to show them to him, so far as any benefit to me was concerned. I did not need to be helped, after I had worked out my sums myself. But when I had got stuck—which was ninety-nine times in a hundred—I then went to him, in order to have him show me how to work them out. And then it was that the master did me good. Before, I felt good when I got out the sum—rare triumph! but ordinarily I went to him that he might teach me. It was help that I needed.

It is a good thing for a man whose physician last saw him with all the airs of an invalid, to surprise his physician some bright morning, by calling upon him, and saying, "Behold a man risen from the dead, Doctor!" That is a very pleasant thing; but ah! it is not then only that a man should see his doctor. When he lies full of suffering, and is growing worse and worse, is the time that he should send for his doctor. A man should send for his physician, not when he has got well, but while he is sick, that he may get well.

We need to go to Jesus as victors, as we shall, one day, if we are faithful; but ah! He will not be so necessary to me when I shall have passed through death, as He is to-day, and to-morrow, and every day, until I die. It is now that I need Him. My times of need are in my conflicts here. It is in this mortal thrall, it is in the breaking of the bands which are tougher than my strength, it is in the tempations that lurk about me on every side, that I need help. It is in the midst of my strifes and struggles that I need a saviour. And it is in your times of need that you should go to Christ: but not when you are conscious that you are getting better, but when you know that you are getting no better, but worse. Jesus is your soul's Physician, and Teacher, and succoring Friend. And He has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." And if there is any one who is conscious of being in moral degradation, the command to him is, *Look unto Jesus.* He is the

All-Helpful, and he will succor you, and will teach you how to gain a victory.

We are not to grieve Christ by despondency and despair in overmeasure, arising out of our evil courses. Many persons fall into the notion that in some sense they make atonement of sin, if afterwards they compel themselves to suffer for it. But we are not to be selfish. We are to remember that, being delivered from our transgressions, we are not our own, but another's—that we belong to Christ.

When Christ was on earth, men were brought to him to be healed. You will observe how He healed them. He said to them, "Take up thy bed and walk!" Suppose a man had taken up his bed, and also his crutches, and gone hobbling off, what would the multitude have thought? And if they had stopped him, and questioned him, and he had said that he was healed, would they not have said to him, "Why do you not stand up straight then? Why do you hobble? Nobody will believe that you are healed. That is not the way to reflect credit on the Master and His power. Throw away your crutches, and take your pallet on your shoulders and walk so that everybody will see that you are well?"

When a man has been drinking forty years, it is never necessary for him to say, "I have been a drunkard." Everybody will know it; and there will be enough to throw it up to him and keep him in memory of it. You do not need ever to say, "I have been a gambler,"—for I believe that Christ is able to save even a gambler. You may have been an impure person; you may have wallowed in wickedness; and when you have risen out of your degradation, there will be a strong temptation for you to run along on the ground and make yourself humble by degrading yourself. But remember that you are healed by the Lord Jesus Christ, and that you have a testimony to give to him, which all the world may see; viz., that, whereas you were blind, now you see. And it is the healing that is to be uppermost in your testimony. It is the grace of God which has restored you that is to be on your lip. "I once was lost, but now am found," is to be your declaration. Your song should be one of glory and joy, and not one of remorse. Look forward. Do not be forever turmoiling your peace by looking backward. Bear a testimony that shall be worthy of Him who has loved you, and redeemed you, and is to make you a king and priest unto God.

4. There is to be encouragement to all those who undertake reformation from sins that seem to them inexpugnable. No man is so great a sinner that he may not repent and turn to God. No man is so great a sinner that, if he try to help himself, God will not help him, and give him a victory. There is no need that any man should con-

tinue in any course of sin. There is no sympathy wanting; there is no hindrance that may not be overcome; there is no power that is equal to that which is exerted in his behalf. For Jesus reigns, and administers nature, and the whole realm of grace in this world, everything, that he may cleanse the impure, forgive transgression, and build up, out of the youth, and out of the inexperience of our earthly life, a manhood of noble simplicity and beauty; and that he may at last present us before the throne of God and his Father, with joy forevermore.

Now, my dear Christian friends, as I have always sought in my ministry among you to make Christ the one, the chief among ten thousand; so when, after this little interval in my preaching, I begin, as it were, again, the new preacher's year, my first message to you is that of the sufficiency of Jesus, who is God manifest in the flesh—his sufficiency for all your want; for your sin; for your sorrow; for your mistakes; for your inexperience; for your despondency; for your hopelessness; for your heartlessness; for everything to which flesh is heir. Look unto Jesus.

Oh, blessed Benefactor! if it be more blessed to give than to receive, how great is the joy of heaven! What streams of mercy are issuing from the heart of God! What boundless benefaction, inexhaustible, and forever growing richer and deeper, is treasured up for us! And if with every upspringing mercy there is upspringing joy in the heart of God, God is the happiest being in the universe, because he is the most beneficent.

Into his service we come. And now, to-day, we shall take hold again of this life; and as we shall join invisible hands, and join hearts, as we draw near to the table of our crucified Redeemer (not crucified, blessed be God—the only crucified Saviour left is the symbolic; but the ever-risen Prince, the Glory and the Power of heaven, who lives forever in endless joy); as we shall gather around the historic memorial, to celebrate the love of Christ, let every one of us look at his own experience, and no one of us drop a tear, or feel a pang of sorrow. He has suffered for us. Look up, long, gaze, and rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ.

If there be any souls here, whether they belong to the outward Church of Christ or not, who belong, conscious of this faith and longing, to the living Jesus, I invite them to this feast of the Lord. For, although the Church, for form's sake, and propriety's sake, administers the Lord's Supper, the Church does not own it, any more than it owns the Bible. The Lord's Supper belongs to every individual who cleaves to the Saviour. And I make the invitation of this church, with the consent of the brotherhood, to all who have a con-

scious reliance upon the Lord Jesus. You are competent to judge, whether, sinful as you are, and unworthy as you are, you look to Jesus for all your hope of salvation: and all who do, I invite to sit with us and partake of these emblems of mercy and love.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We thank thee, our Father, for the day in which we were taught to know thee. We thank thee for those continuous disclosures which have been made from time to time, for the Word, and for that providence and that inward experience wrought by the Holy Spirit, through which the heart itself becomes luminous, and thy providences are interpreted. For in thee we live and move and have our being. And when we are not conscious of thee, we have no life; we are orphans; we wander, and are aliens for the commonwealth of Israel. But what time thou dost bring us back to the consciousness of thy life, of thy love, of all the blessed things which thou hast prepared for us, we live indeed. No longer in disturbance of our lower passions, no longer in the midst of dins, and jars, and conflicts with outward things and circumstances, we are brought into the sanctuary of peace. Our inward thoughts are enlightened by thy Spirit. We are lifted above ourselves, and we are what we are in God. We are made pure by thought of purity for us. Thou dost clothe us as we shall be, even now as we are. Thou dost look at us and see what that to which we are coming by thy grace will do as in thy sight now. As we look upon our children, and imagine that to which they are coming, but with an erring gaze, and with many mistakes, and yet with much comfort, and are patient with their weakness till they shall reach their strength, and with their faults till they shall have learned their virtues better, so more gloriously, in a greater amplitude of love, with infinite pity and infinite tenderness, and forbearance, and gentleness, thou dost look, not at what we are, so much as at that to which we shall come through our faults, through our frequent downfalls and sins, through our weakness. All the glory of our future estate is before thee. For, is not our name in thy book? Is not our place waiting for us? Are there not for us palms? Are we not yet, as spirits of just men made perfect, to stand in thy presence above? Are we not to hold on a course of joy forevermore? And is it not all open before thee? Naked and open are we before Him with whom we have to do. And thou dost look royally upon us, and wait till we emerge, till we grow, and outgrow our manifold imperfections and sins. And from day to day, with infinite tenderness, thou dost forgive the sins of the day. From day to day with sorrow thou dost help us to sorrow, and with cleansing repentance thou dost teach us to forsake our sins. And thou art still working in us. Thou art healing us. And when thou hast healed us, we become more and more precious to thee. For we know, in our lesser sphere, that those for whom we do the most become most to us. We see how parents cling to the most needy of their children, to succor them, and to bring them through their infirmities, and love them with a strength that is in proportion to the strength which they have given them. And in that we desire to interpret thee, and to rejoice in the experience which thus is a symbol of God's government to us. And oh! if thou dost love us in proportion to our faults, how deep is thy sympathy! and how strong is thy yearning! Thou that wilt not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax till thou dost bring forth judgment unto victory, how great is the sum of thy mercy toward us for whom thou hast done so much, who still need so much, and

who will to the very end of life need so much. For there is not a day before us that is not to have its dark shadows. We have not yet learned to carry our pride in consonance with love. We have not yet learned to carry about the truth in its purity. We have not yet learned to overcome vanity, and an undue love of praise from men rather than from God. We have not yet learned how to counterbalance our senses by our spiritual life. We forget thee; we forget heaven; we forget our errands upon earth; we forget our better selves; we are often baptized in darkness, and seldom in hope, and light, and joy. All that is in us yet nascent. All that thou art doing for us, thou art doing for those who are yet to be. In life we are as children in the womb, and are to be born only when death comes and opens to let us forth into the clearness and blessedness of our life in heaven. Thou art carrying us. We are born, and we are to be born, of thee. And we rejoice in this fullness; in the disclosure of thy nursing love, of thy patient waiting; of thy all-formative mercy. We rejoice that we are what we are, not by grace in ourselves, and not by our own power, which is but little, and unexercised, and unwise, and unskilled, but by the mighty power of God. And our hope is not that we shall overcome our adversaries, but that we shall have the generous love and companionship of Christ Jesus, who will not suffer any to perish, but will bear the lambs in his arms; who will go out after the sheep that wander from the path in the wilderness, and bring them back with infinite tenderness and gentleness, and rejoice over one that wanders more than over all the flock that has kept its estate. How wonderful is the insight which we get of thy mercy! How wonderful is the realm and glory of God's heart, where no contending, no rage and no passion are; where medicating mercy is; where is upbuilding love; where infinite patience and gentleness are; where the growths of all creation, coming up through labor pain, and groaning and travailing until now, are nourished and supervised until thou shalt bring forth judgment unto victory.

Lord, our God! thou art such an one as we need—a refuge, a defense out of ourselves, and out of our fears, which are of the Devil. We flee away to thee, and come into the fulness of trust, and into the obedience of trust. We desire not to offend thee again by untruthfulness, having offended thee by sin; but may we know thy loving and tender mercy, and thy forgiving love and gentleness; may we know how to draw thee as thou art drawing us.

And now we beseech of thee, O Lord our God, that thou wilt help every one that is seeking to live higher and better than he has lived. Help those to reform who only mean reformation; and yet do better for them than they ask or think. Help those who are coming out of evil courses into newness of life. Though they be babes in Christ, and wander often, and cry, still bear them with patience and with care, until they are able to be men in Christ Jesus.

Be with all who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and long for higher attainments in the divine life. We pray that they may have that perfect peace which passeth all understanding.

And now, as we are walking in the infirmities and sins of this life, so may we walk in the common hope and certainty that, after life has dealt with us, and disciplined us, and purified us, we shall meet together nobler in companionship, better for love, purer and truer, better worthy of each other. And then we shall wonder that we found it so hard to bear with each other on earth. Then we shall wonder that we did so little good, that we had so much of reproach, and that we were so little helpful to each other. Then, in the glory of that ecstatic vision, how will they stand royal to our eye who are so full of faults, and against whom we gnash with accusation and criticism. And grant that the coming hope, the coming joy, the certainty of redemption, the beauty of the love that is to be in heaven, may shine back through faith upon us, and that we may see these things even

now though but in shadow, and toward those that are in delusion and folly, be more gentle, more patient, more helpful.

Bless all the households that belong to this congregation. Bless parents and children. We pray that the young may grow up able to discern and to eschew what is evil, and to embrace that which is high-minded and noble, and good.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless all the labor of the Sabbath-schools and Bible-classes — all that are teaching, and all that are taught. Remember, we beseech thee, those who go forth, from day to day, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, to find the wanderers, and who in the streets, and in prisons, and everywhere, seek to make known Jesus Christ. And we pray that their labor may not be in vain.

And we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing upon all the churches of this city, and of the great city near us, and throughout all this land. And may this day be a day of mercy everywhere. And may those that are feebly seeking in waste places, and under circumstances of discouragement, to do good, feel the inward strength of God moving them to their duties this day.

And may thy kingdom come everywhere. Look upon the whole earth, now shaken with the tread of thy feet. Going forth for wrath, and for a wrath that is to reveal mercy, when thou shalt have smitten, and burned, and rocked, and overthrown, and done the terrible work with the plow of thy justice, then open the upturned furrows; and grant that the seeds of righteousness and peace may be sown, and that the nations of the earth may learn war no more, but that all lands may see thy salvation, and every man sit under his own vine and fig tree, and the joy of God be the possession of the whole earth.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

GOD'S LOVE SPECIFIC AND PERSONAL.

And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.—GAL. II. 20.

It is not the intensity of this experience that I wish to point out, but its peculiar element of personalness. The life that the apostle lives in the flesh, the inmost life, the secret spring of it, is that which is derived from his love to Christ—from his faith of the Son of God. And that Son of God presented himself to his imagination and to his thought as what? As one who loved the great lover? No, not that; but as one who loved *me*; who gave himself for *me*. There is a characteristic element of this experience—the recognition of the divine love, and the bringing home of that love to one's own personal experience. The Gospel teaching is that God's love is the prime and grand attribute of his nature. This is the foundation of government, the source of moral law, the philosophy of history, the one golden thread on which all events are strung—although often it is hidden by the things strung upon it.

But this view suggests God's benevolence to our minds, rather than God's love. It is a golden haze of good-will that we look into. So, men think, the summer sun shines on the hills universally, and nourishes infinite flowers and fruits, and cares for nothing of all its brood. It makes them, and fondly fingers them until they are moulded, and fills them with sweet incense and sweet flavors, and then leaves them. For the sun cares not that the apple drops, or that the flower withers. They live, and they perish, and the sun goes on. And when all are cut off, and it rolls in winter, it seems to be just as merry, and just as bright, and just as joyous a sun as it was in the midst of summer.

So men think that God's beneficence is a kind of sunlight, flaming with a flashing fire abroad. It does throw down a certain good will upon everybody, and upon everything indifferently, without regard to character or position. A certain sunshine of the divine nature it is. And many conceive of God's love as being so universal that it is hardly personal. It is atmospheric to their thought—not minute, not specific.

But the God of revelation is a father. Mankind are his children. He knows all of them, and is personal to each, and is specific to every

SUNDAY MORNING, Oct. 2, 1870. LESSON: ISAIAH. XLIII. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 130, 513, 381.

individual creature of the vast household, innumerable and inconceivable by us. The thought of God points to each one; and as if there was but a single creature in the universe, he looks on that one. As long ago as Isaiah, God had declared,

"I have called thee by thy name,"

as I read in your hearing this morning. And still again, if possible with more minuteness, in the forty-fifth chapter, he says,

"I have even called thee by thy name. I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me. I girded thee, though thou has not known me."

The personality and the disinterestedness and the universality of the divine love are wonderfully set forth in the Old Testament Scriptures —particularly in the later disclosures of the prophets.

The presentation of this thought stirs up a great many doubts in those who have been exercised thereby. Men think that Paul probably was beloved, that Peter was beloved, and that many others were beloved. Men look around, and think that their mother was beloved, and that others, with superior natures and symmetrical parts, and full of moral excellences, were beloved. They can well conceive how those who draw upon their amiable feelings, might likewise excite in the divine mind personal affection. But they say, "When men love single persons, it does not follow that they love all persons. And God loves men, doubtless; but does he love every one?" *God so loved the world*, is the comprehensive answer to that question. God loved the world, and the *whole* world. And the word *world*, for its definition and boundaries, runs through all time, and among all races. It includes in it all individuals, from age to age. Everywhere God loved the *whole world.*

"Yes," men say, "but God loves men after he has made them loveable." But the apostle says, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that *while we were yet sinners Christ died* for *us.*" Love which death tested but could not measure, was shed abroad toward each man and the whole world, without moral conditions. That is the import of what the apostle says. God's disinterestedness is made plain, in that he loves each man, not on condition of repentance, but whether he repents or not. He loves men, not because there is that in them which has a tendency to excite complacency, but though they are sinful. He loves unlovely men. Yea, men that we could not love, God loves. And his love is not generic. It is not a part of the governmental benevolence. It is individualized both ways—in the heart of God, and in the heart of the recipients. It is God's nature to love what his eye looks upon. Every human being, whether he is good, or whether he is bad, God loves. I do not say that it makes no difference to God whether men are good, or whether they are bad, but I do say that the great crowning fact of divine love has no respect of character—that it precedes character, and is not founded upon it.

To be sure, the benefit of that love to us depends very largely upon our faith, and upon our repentance; but the existence of the divine personal love does not depend on us in any wise. It is—if I may apply to God language which belongs to men—the constitutional nature of God. It is the tendency of his attributes. This is that which makes Jesus Jehovah, God, and all others liars. It is this power of universal and yet individualizing love which has in it creative influence, cleansing influence, but which precedes all cleansing and all creative results.

Love is the test of divinity. It carries with it a great many other things. It carries with it in God the conception of purity, and of uprightness, and of integrity of disposition, and of justice, and of truth. It carries with it, also, the full idea of instrumentality—both penalty and reward, pleasure and pain. And back of all these, as the root-ground out of which they spring, as the source from which they come, as the animating influence which runs through them all, is love. And that love is personal to us. It is divine, infinite; and yet it touches each one by name throughout the whole realm.

Men have familiarized themselves, however, with those elements of the divine character which are nearest to their own natures, or which are represented by the things that are most familiar to them in the material world around them. And so it has come to pass that force, universality, knowledge, seem to them far more potent attributes in the nature of God than love does. We think that God is omnipotent, omnicient, omnipresent; we think that he is just and good; we think that he is impartial and righteous; but we think that love is something that comes in after all the conditions of these other attributes have been satisfied. When men shall have so arranged nature and character that they stand before God at such an angle or in such a light that the love of purity is satisfied, and the love of justice is satisfied, and the love of obedience and law and government is satisfied, then whatever remains in them, whatever virtue is left, is love. And that love is supposed to be the premium of perfected obedience afterwards; whereas, in the representations of the Bible, love goes first of all, and is the reason of everything in the divine character and the divine administration.

You know how forts are built. There are outworks; there are lines of deep ditches to keep off the enemy; there are ramparts on which swarms, at every angle, mighty artillery, that crosses and recrosses in every direction. A fort is a vast mechanism of brute force, thrown up to protect those who are within, and to destroy those who assail it from without. And yet, somewhere, hid in the center of this vast complicated fort, there is a house where the commandant lives. And there he has his little parlor, and his family, and all the amenities of a loving household.

So men think of God's moral government. They have an idea that it is a thing of vast proportions, with its artillery, and huge laws, and sweeping outworking bulwarks of power, and right, and wrong, and penalty; but that hid somewhere back in that government, if you can only get through all this mighty maze, you will find there is a little house where God lives, and where he has a heart; and that there he is a God of love. And this is very naturally the conception, because we have borrowed our notions of God from bad analogies, from an unwise mode of philosophy, and from things which are the most simple to us—from animal forces, brute forces, natural forces.

As almost universally men make God a magistrate and not a father; as they derive their ideas of government from magisterial governments on earth—from human governments—from governments whose most important principles are made up to accommodate man's weakness, and never can be the analogues of divine government, in which are infinite wisdom and strength; as we have derived our chief conception of God from things in ourselves and about ourselves, so it has come to pass that from the beginning down to this day, and yet, and among Christian people, and in Christian congregations, the predominating idea of God is stone—stone at the foundation; stone all the way up the lighthouse; stone until, far up in the air, there is a little crystal dome, where the lighthouse sends out its light—all stone, except one small star, hanging in the void atmosphere.

It is no wonder, then, that men, in coming to the comprehension, to the love, and to the service of such a being, have to cumber themselves with huge doubts, suffering, and trouble, before they work out that perfect conception of God by which they are able to say, out of their own joyous, summer-like consciousness, "He died for *me*; the life that I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved *me*, and who loves *me*, and who gave himself in form and shadow once for *me*, and now in reality is giving his eternal life, and all the effulgence and fullness of it, is giving himself, for ever and for ever, for *me*,—just as much for *me* as if there were not another person in the universe, although there are countless myriads."

We are to apply to this grand centre of divinity all those measures by which we strive to interpret infinity in other directions in the divine nature. We speak of God's infinite wisdom rather as running out along the line of science. We trace all the gradations in creation. We trace all the mechanisms of the infinite fillings up that go from star to star. We then listen to the testimony of the probabilities as respects the scope, the extent, the magnitude, of the physical creation, and we are lost in the conception of the wisdom that can provide, and regulate, and care for, this infinite procession of things. So that we come

to a very enormous conception of God's infinity, in the direction of wisdom. And by the same line of reasoning, we trace out the divine power, and gain a conception of infinity in relation to the realm of physics as the witness of God's power.

Now, love is just as really infinite as wisdom, and is prior to it. It has precedence of it. If we are accustomed to think of God's infinite, measureless, unaccountable, productive power; and if we think of God's infinite being in the direction of wisdom, why do we not take the yet nobler attribute of God's love, and run that out by infinities, and by analogues and illustrations that shall make it as vast, as voluminous, as potent, as other divine attributes? For it is his own consciousness, without a doubt, in which he glories.

When Moses asked to be permitted to behold God, that he might have some balanced conception of the divine nature and government, four-fifths of the picture that was displayed to him, the dramatic representation that was made before him, was God's long-suffering, and mercy, and forgiveness, and kindness, and graciousness, and goodness, and love. And when Moses asked to see God's glory, what the Lord himself thought to be the most beautiful and the noblest things about himself, were graciousness, goodness, long-suffering. "These," saith the Lord, "are my most glorious attributes, although I will not clear the guilty." Such was the portrait; and this was simply the addition to prevent the perversion of it—as we shall have occasion, before we are done, to prevent the perversion of the doctrine.

Here is the equator, if I may so say, or the diameter, of the divine nature. It is greater at this point than at the point of wisdom, or at the point of power—or rather, it is more influential. For, although we may not say that one divine attribute is greater than another, we may say that one has more emphasis, and more importance, and more influence than another, in a moral scale.

Love, then, is the ministrant force of the universe. It is that energy which lies behind all phenomena; which creates law, and shapes government, and administers them both. It is that which lies behind all pain, and all sorrow, and all suffering. These things seem here to spring from malign causes, because many men think they do, to a very large extent; and they are traced back and over to a demoniac God, or to demons. But, according to the teachings of the New Testament, God's central nature is love, and his government is the issue of that love; and all the phenomena in the universe, if they are traced back to their source, will be found at last to have been coördinated under this great central attribute and element of the divine character.

Force and penalty are sent out by love, and are but its hands. Justice and indignation are but so many surgeon-hands of love. The

whole play of light and of shadow, of tears and of groans, of sorrows and of turmoil, in time, either have sprung from, or have been permitted by, infinite central love, and at last will be found to have been working in the cause of that love. For God is love; and God is government; and government is love; and all phenomena are intimately blended or connected with it.

With these declarations before us, I proceed to some points of application.

1. The Love of God is the one truth which nature, as it is developed by matter alone, cannot teach us. Why do men need revelation? Because, although there are analogies which receive light afterwards, and interpret something to us of the divine nature, there is nothing in nature itself, as far as by that term we mean the physical globe, which would ever tell us that the great central element and influence of the universe is love.

Power, wisdom, skill, taste, goodness,—of these we may find evidences in the divine character as interpreted through nature; but even the Apostle Paul, when reasoning to the Romans in respect to the revelations which nature gave of God, only claims that by nature they might know his "eternal power and Godhead"—that is to say, power and government. That we can interpret from nature; but who could make out an argument from nature in favor of divine benevolence alone, as distinct from personal love? No man can. When you come to consider all the organizations that evidently carry in their organic nature pain-producing tendencies, you find that every human faculty kicks back with just as much pain as it thrusts forward with pleasure. Every single faculty is made with a double action—with one action which is painful, and another that is joyful. And everywhere, all over the world, there are in nature agencies which tend to mischief—that is, to the production of pain, and disorder, and disorganization, and trouble. The whole natural world presents such phenomena that one school of philosophers think they come from chance, and have no regulation. And thoughtful men in every age of the world—Job, and the prophets, and all great natures since their time down to our present day, have reasoned upon this subject. And yet, it is one of the most profound pieces of speculation, how there can be a moral government, and yet so much suffering and power of evil, in this world. Where did evil come from? How did it happen to be in the world? Why is virtue so often chastised, and vice so often crowned with power and with enjoyment? If there be a God, and a God who loves, and is good and beneficent, why is the world what it is? The world has been the stumbling-block of thoughtful men from the beginning. Nor do I believe that nature can be made to teach us the personal qualities

of God; and still less, that He is a being supremely centred in one great, divine, universal, impartial personal love.

The struggles which we see going on for existence among all the races of animals; that law of success in the brute world by which strength always wins and weakness is always compelled to yield, is just exactly the reverse of the law of the spiritual kingdom, where they that would be chief are to be the servants, and the weakest are to be exalted, as in the arms of love, to the best experiences of pleasure and protection.

The mode in which men are created and scattered abroad upon the earth, through century-long periods, and left apparently to themselves is another source of perplexity among thinking men. The greater part of the human race to-day have never had the light of revelation. Of the men that are spread abroad through Africa, nine hundred and ninety-nine men in a thousand have not even seen a twilight revelation; and the other one, to make up the thousand, has had only a twilight revelation. And yet, the law seems to go abroad upon the whole race. Whichever way we look, suffering, sorrow, limitation, mistake, yea, neglect, seems to be the order of things.

And then, the silence of God has always seemed to me a profound mystery. I never could understand why, if there was over all this great world a Father, and an eternal Father, and his nature was love, he should not speak; why he should not show himself; why there should not be, as often as once in a thousand years, an appearance of God; why there should not be, at least once in a man's life-time, an answering voice that should make him perfectly certain of the existence of God, and of a moral government; why, the race being made as they are, being besotted as they are, and being, as they are, rolled and dashed in waves of conflict, every one of which is made up of myriad drops of blood, and this life being a vast brutal gladiation, as it were, God should be silent. Tell me, Nature, what you can, of such a God as this. Tell me if there be no need of a revelation which shall make known to us that which is behind all phenomena, and behind all that appears in the natural world. There is something that nature cannot interpret. There is something that the law of matter, the law of force, the law of organization, and the law of evolvement and development cannot interpret. There is something that it needed God's own self to make known, by holy men of old, moved by the Holy Ghost.

It is this necessity of God that he should make himself known that is the foundation of revealed religion. It is that peculiar need to-day which science least cares for, and most rejects; viz., a suffering, atoning Saviour. It is that which is most indispensable to men who put away from them all their instruction except that which they can

get from the rocks, from the soil, from the stars, from chemistry, from the mere elements of the material world. The secret forces of the globe leave us desolate, without a Father, without love, without sympathy, wanderers. We are as the mighty icebergs in the dark winters of the North, that grind each other, neither knowing what they do—only we know and feel, but are impelled by mighty forces. And if we have hope in this world only, and we have no God such as the Gospel reveals to us, we are of all men most miserable. And if there be any one thing that science cannot supply, and that natural philosophy cannot supply, it is this faith in a loving God, and a God whom we can love—something deeper than material phenomena; something behind the mask of matter—another world of spirit; another government besides the law of matter; another Being besides that fate which frowns, and fills the world with sorrow.

This is that which the Gospel of Christ has brought to us, and which nature could not give, and which man could not get through reason.

2. This truth of the Divine Love is the one truth through which nature looks, beyond all others in our apprehension, in our systems of theology, and in our preaching. For, although we have a talkative knowledge, though men speak of the love of God, there are comparatively few of us who have that crowning knowledge of it which indicates that it is genuine, deep, certain, abiding. There are very few who are able to realize more than this: "God is good, and ought to be loved; and I hope that I love Him." But ah! that greater truth of which this is the merest inflection—"God loves me, and has loved me since I was born. God's nature is such that he pours incessant thought upon me, upon my disposition, upon my circumstances, upon my nature, upon my trials, and upon my destiny; and my feeling toward my child that I am striving to bring up, father or mother though I be, is weak and pale compared with the intensity of the infinite love that I am the object of in God"—how many are there who have that, and who feel from day-to-day that they stand up in the love of God? As one stands up in the full sunlight that comes down upon him, and bathes him, and flows past him, and covers all that is about him, and goes on through leagues and latitudes and infinite spaces, and in inexhaustible abundances; so the love of God throws down upon the world, not enough to fill up your thimble-sized hearts alone, but enough to overflow you and go on in infinite waves for uncounted beings—and that forever and forever. How many men are there who walk every day, feeling, "I am the King's son; I am the Lord Jehovah's; and Jehovah loves me by name, knowing what my imagination is, knowing what my passions and appetites are, knowing what my pride is, knowing all the wallow of my selfishness, know-

ing all the obliquities of my disposition. Yet when the eye of God rests on me, it rests on me as a mother's eye rests upon her child. And the parent does not love the child according to its deserts. The parent loves the child whether it deserves it or not. And it is God's nature to love just so." How many are there who, as a matter of experience, feel that?

We think that if we fix ourselves up a little, God will perhaps love us. A man is in deep distress, and there is a great heart in the neighborhood (I hope there is at least one great heart in every neighborhood), and he is told that if he will go and tell that great heart what his mistakes have been, and what his misfortunes are, that great heart will certainly relieve him. And instantly he begins to think of himself, and to fix himself to go to that great heart, covering up his rags the best way he can, and hiding his elbows so that they shall not be seen, and putting a little touch on his shoes that are clouted and ruptured; and then goes in. But do you suppose it makes any difference to that great heart to whom he goes, that his clothes are a little less dirty, or that they have a few less patches on them, or that his shoes are a little less soiled or torn? It is the man behind the clothes that the benevolent heart thinks of. It is not what the needy man is, but what the benefactor is, that determines what he will do.

Why does he take that man into his compassion, and say to him, "Come again." Does he do it because of what he sees in the man? or because of what he feels in himself?

Why does a bird sing? Because he thinks you would like to hear him? No; but because there is that in him which tickles him and fires him till he has to sing. He sings to bring joy out of himself. He sings because it is his nature to sing.

A music-box does not play because you say, "Do play;" nor because you say, "It is exquisite and charming." It does not care for your compliments and comments.

And so it is with the divine nature. That is the way God is made —if I may use human language in application to the divine nature. That is being God. And yet, how few there are who think of God as generously as he thinks of them! How few say, "I am loved of God, unworthy though I be; poor though I am; though I be lean in all moral attributes. I forget him; but he never forgets me. I requite selfishness for goodness; but it never makes any ripple on the surface of that infinite ocean of benignity and love. I am bad; I am unfilial; I am ungrateful; I am wicked—desperately wicked; I am a transgressor in a multitude of ways; and yet there is a God who does not forget me, and who will hold me as in the hollow of his hand so long as love can by holding do good."

How few there are who think that God loves them! What is it? Do you think you love God? Do you think you have given your heart to Christ? That is not unimportant; but ah! the other thing is a thousand times more important; viz., Do you know that God loves *you?* Do you know that he gave himself for *you*, and that he lives for your sake, and that behind these phenomena of nature which we see on earth rise the real life and the real world—the great world of spirits, where are God, and love, and summer, and eternity, and joy unspeakable; and that they are yours?

So neither, as we leave this thought of divine love far behind in our experience, are we apt to fill it up enough in our theology. Men have built systems of theology in every age, and will and ought to till the end of the world; but men build their systems of theology, I think, with a great deal more consideration for material elements, for elements that are in sympathy with the lower forms of existence, than for elements that relate to their spiritual nature. And above all things men have built their theology, riveting and re-riveting every part of it, so that it shall stand against error; so that it shall be inexpugnable; so that it shall guard the government of God; so that it shall keep men from going in this or that wrong way. We have attempted to build a theology which shall prevent men from going wrong. But God himself never prevented a man's going wrong; and you will never do it. What we want in that direction is to get an influential conception of God; and our theology must bring God out in such lines, in such lineaments, and in such universal attractiveness, that men shall follow their yearnings and drawings, rather than their cold reasonings and intellections. We are perpetually teaching that God maintains law, and that he must maintain government; and at last we hear so much about law that we really come to think that when God created the universe he filled it with laws, and afterwards put some people in it; but that the laws were the nearest and dearest to him. God's government, men think, must be made holy and just and good in the sight of all men, and must stand. And so the impression is that, first of all, God takes care of his government and his laws, and then does whatever he can after that. But I tell you, God does not take care of his government and his laws at the expense of his creatures. One would think, to hear theologians reasoning about God and the methods of salvation, and the motives of divine procedure, that he was a fourth-proof lawyer judge, and that he sat surrounded by infinite volumes of statutes and laws, running back to eternity and running forward to eternity; and that in every case of mercy he said, "Let me consider first. Does it agree with the statute?" When a poor sinner comes to him, undone, wretched, miserable, he has to consult his books to see whether he can be saved so as not to injure the

law, saying, "Let us examine the law to see if it will do to save him."

Oh! away with this pedantic judge. Such a judge is bad enough in the necessities of a weak earthly government, and is infinitely shameful when brought to the center of the universe, and deified. There I behold God, flaming with love, backward and forward, either way, filling infinite space with the magnitude and blessedness of his love; and, if some questioning angel asks, "How shalt thou save and keep the law?' He says, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. My own will, my own impulse, my own desire, my own heart—that shall guide me. What are laws, and what are governments, and what is anything compared with a sentient being? I am law, and I will govern." God's presence is everything that government needs; and he says, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; I will not be checked; I will be an ocean, without a shore, boundless, meeting but itself, and rolling in an eternal harmony and blessedness of love."

In our preaching I think we fall just as much behind as we do in our personal experience and our theology. We have preached the truth—and that is right. We have preached justice—and that is right. We have preached the necessity of believing right, and of sincerity as well—and that is right. But, after all, the characteristic impression, produced by our preaching, I fear, has not been the influence of divine love. It has not been the real central working power of the ministry. It is that which melts the heart, it is that which encourages hope, it is that which inspires courage, it is that which cleanses, that is needed. Fear does but very little. Fear may start a man on the road to conversion; but fear never converted a man. Truth does something. It shows the way, it opens a man's eyes; but simple truth, mere intellection, never converted a man. No man's heart ever grew rich, no man's heart ever had a God-touch in it, until he had learned to see God as one whom he loves.

It was that which broke my heart. It was on an early spring morning. Oh! how full of music were the woods, as I remember them, that lay beyond my father's house on Walnut Hill, at Lane Seminary! But of all the notes of birds that sang in the trees on every hand, there was not one which sounded sweet in my ear. How full, on that morning, was the sky, of little fleecy clouds that ran hither and thither, sent on errands of nameless joy! And yet there was no beauty in them to me. I was borne down; I was sad; in a thousand ways I was orphaned and godless; until, suddenly, as the result of some readings and discussions preceding, I was raised to a conception of God, not as a Being who did things on plan, or on purpose, but as one whose nature was medicinal; whose inevitable and chief characteristic was love; who loved because that was existence to him; who poured out

his love upon all, whether they would see it or not, and whether they would take it or not.

In other words, when I had a God whom I could call Love, universal, infinite, ineffable, from that moment I said, "I can worship God. I can worship, not power, not threat, but Love. I cannot worship a God who, having created such a world as this is, and such creatures as these are, lays a line of strict justice upon them; but I can worship a God who deals with men as a father deals with his children."

Oh! what a hell this world has been! Oh! how men have been like grapes in the wine-vat, and had the blood crushed out of them! Tears and blood-drops have been innumerable; and the shores of eternity have been beaten on incessantly by the waves of sorrow and trouble that have rolled in from this world. And I cannot see in all these things any evidence that God is a Being of love. It is not until revelation brings before my mind the conception that behind these phenomena, that are transient, and shall pass away, there rises the blessedness, the riches, the heart of the Eternal Lover, that I can lie down and say, "Thou art my God. Do thou what thou wilt. Thy will be done in heaven, and thy will be done on earth; and chiefly, and first, thy will be done in this poor sin-sick heart of mine."

I can love *love*, but I cannot love mere justice. When, however, love is also just; when love is infinitely true and pure and beautiful; when love is radiant with taste; when love is that which spans the night with glory, and makes the day efflorescent with beauty; when you thus give to love the very attribute of grandeur—then it becomes all the more priceless. But first there must be love. Love first, and not justice; love first, and not condemnation. Let love be supreme, and then I can worship.

This, too, will give you to understand what it is that men mean by *faith*—if you will bear for a moment such a deviation. The perception of this true character of God in Christ Jesus, and the appropriation of it to your own self—that is what we understand by *saving personal faith*. The generic meaning of faith is simply such a use of your reason and your moral faculties that you are conscious of the great invisible truths of the realm. Faith is "the evidence of things not seen." It is the living, not in materiality as interpreted by sense, but in great truths that are interpreted by the moral sentiments, or by moral intuition.

But there are special faiths—for there may be a great variety of specifics under this generic; and the great special faith is that by which a soul, beholding Christ who is altogether lovely and loving, realizes it, or takes him home to itself, and says, "That is my God. He loves me. He gave himself for me." This is the supreme act of faith;

and this saves. It brings the mind into such a condition that it instantly is in communication with God.

A young man stands in a telegraph office, and along the line of the wires is the passage of electricity; and he hears the dumb ticks of the instrument; but they mean nothing to him. He looks on, as a child would look on; but still these various ticks signify nothing to his ear. But by-and-by the operator draws out from under the needle-point a long strip of printed paper; and it is a message from the man's father, saying to him, "Come home." Home-sick he has been, and longing for permission to go. And oh! in one instant, in one flash, how that young man's feeling is changed! A moment ago, as he looked on that dumb wire, it was nothing to him; but now he sees it as the instrument whose ticks have written that message from his father, "Come home."

Here was a heart conscious of its need, longing, yearning, homesick, going hither and thither; and not finding an answer to its aspiration, nor satisfaction to its longing, it is brought at length to that position in which the truth comes breaking through it. Partly by the imagination, partly by the reason, much more by the moral intuition, and more than all by the power of the Holy Ghost, the truth comes down upon the soul, saying, "Child thou art. The Father am I. I love thee with an everlasting love. Thy name is graven on my hand. As lovers carry the portrait of their dear ones, or have their names inscribed about their persons, so thy name is engraved upon my hand, and thy likeness has been in the palm of that hand." In that blessed moment of intuition there is a realization of that full form and experience of faith which works by love and saves the soul.

With this conception of the divine love in our minds, we are prepared to form some idea of the nature and issue of that mixed and strange course which we call human love. I think that when the Gospel has refined a community, and inspired industry, skill and education; when philosophy has cleansed it in certain directions, and art in certain others, and virtue in certain others; when the household is built up, and a man has a glorious father and a noble mother, and has been brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and has been reared to believe a perfect system of theology, and has good health, and wealth enough, and good prospects, he is apt to sit down and say, "Well, I believe in my religion; and I do not see any reason for doubts, or fears, or any trouble whatever. Everything is clear to me. It is perfectly just that God should be what I hear he is." Persons who are wrapped in comforts and consolations do not feel any need. But suppose you should forget yourself; suppose you should take those sermons which you hear preached out of the pulpit,

of the exceeding justice of God, and of the sovereignty of God, and sit down and apply them, for a moment, to the Laplanders, and consider who they are; what their development has been; what the natural and artificial laws are under which they have been brought up; and what are the possibilities of human nature under such circumstances? Go on to the Tartars, and the Calmucks, and the Chinese; and to the islands of Oceanica—Sumatra, and Java, and the others; and to the great unexplored regions of Africa. Gather together the human races, and consider under what sun they have lived, and what privileges they have had, and what their nature is. Consider what the great God has created them to. Consider what wars have devastated them. And consider what men have been in civilized nations. Consider what the history of the globe has been. And then come back home again. Go out of your pleasant houses; go among men that are in trouble round about you. Take your statistics and solve the problems of actual life with them. Take into account the bankruptcy of this man, and the utter degradation of that man. Think how society treats a man who has transgressed its laws, and how hard it is for a man who has taken one wrong step to get back again.

Life is full of poisonous, jagged justice; and if a man take benevolence, with these doubts, and go out and look at life as it actually is, I do not know what will save him from infidelity, unless he has back of all phenomena a government and a Governor whose name and whose attribute is absolute Love, and from which he learns that all these phenomena are specious and illusory and transitional, and that the time is coming for them to take on other and more advanced forms.

You know that when the seed sprouts it dies. If the seed were a philosopher, it would think that a hard way to live. The seed dies before it lives. And so it is with men, in a spiritual sense. Sorrow is the frost that cracks the nut that lets the germ out into the ground. Troubles are God's rains in this world. Irritations, rude convulsions, rough experiences, by various methods—these are the means by which God is preparing a moral soil for the future. I do not know what the reasons are for these things. I cannot answer all the theological questions which arise among men, minister though I am. Doubtless you think that because I am a minister, I ought to know everything; but I do not know everything about theology. I know very little about it. I know very little about God. There is not a man nor a child here who does not think that he knows more than I do. The sum of my knowledge is this: I do believe in the Divine Being. My soul says, "Certainly there is a God;" and it says that that God is paternal; and that the divine government is a family government, and not a magisterial nor monarchical government; and that it is a personal gov-

ernment, generated in love, carried out in love, and to be consummated in love; and that behind the blackness, the tear, the pang, the wrong and the sin, there is to be evolved in the eternal ages the triumph of love.

For everybody? I cannot measure. All I know is this: if there be one soul that at last comes short of eternal life, it will be because that soul has stood up in the very tropical atmosphere of divine love, and that love has poured itself upon that soul without obstruction, and it was absolutely immedicable and unhealable. Only those will be lost whom love could not save; and if you are lost, it will not be because you missed a narrow switch, and just did not come out right; nor because you run off the track by being moved one-tenth part of an inch in the wrong direction; nor because you made mistakes in your faith; nor because you were unfortunate; nor because you did not do this, that, or the other thing which the churches prescribe; nor because you did not believe this, that or the other doctrine held by the churches. You will never be God's castaway until rivers of infinite love have been poured on you. And then, if you are not changed, ought you not to be a castaway?

What those steps are, or how they are to be taken, I know not. Only this I know: love is a fact; and the divine administration of love is a truth; and the ages are God's. And I have more faith in what Love will think it is best to do, than in what theologians think it is best to do; and I believe God will take this great sinning, sorrowing, blood-shedding world up into his arms, and comfort it, as a mother comforts her sorrowing children. And I believe that sighing shall flee away, that God will wipe all tears from men's eyes, and that all the sorrows which have made the earth wretched in days gone by, he will, in his own way, and according to his own good pleasure, medicate; so that at last the universal Father, with the universal household, shall sit central in the universe, God over all, blessed and blessing forever more.

Will you not join those who have faith in such a paternal government? Will you not belong to Him who calls you, if by authority, yet by the authority of love? Will you join yourself to the dark, to the selfish, to the brutal, to the ignoble? Will you not rise among God's people, who live by faith, by hope, by the sweet purities of a refined love? Will you not sign yourself his, and call him "*My* Saviour, *my* God," and say, with the apostle, "The life that I now live in the flesh I live by faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me"?

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

Draw near to us, thou divine Spirit. Awaken all our moral sense and all our affection, and quicken our imaginations, that we may lift ourselves above fear, and above sight, and above the flesh, and above matter, and above all time and history, and every appearance of conflict, and call thee Father. How, through all the conflict of time, thy name breathes music! If thou art, and if love is with thee, abiding forevermore as the foundation of thy government, all shall be well. We know not what we are driving to, nor the way in which the world is traveling, that groans and travails in pain until now. Nor can we know what the unfoldings of things shall bring to pass. But if thou art love, and if thou dost interpret thy love to us by the language of love in the household, so that we may know God, even as children know their parents, and may understand thy will and thy motive, and all the feelings with which thou art administering, even as most beloved children understand the will and reasons which actuate their parents, then all is peace; and we care not what shall happen, for we know that in the end everything shall round up out of night into the morning of everlasting gladness. O Lord God! if the stretching out of the right hand of thy power, and if all the solemnity and amplitude of thy justice, are but the vocalizations of love; if we behold thee truest and best when we discern thee loving with an infinite love whose outpouring is the life of the universe; and if thou art our God most when we are nearest to thee in affection, then what can go wrong? What punishment is too much, which love inflicts? What suffering is too severe, which love thinks best? If thou art infinite in thy love, and art guiding infinite love in application by infinite wisdom, why should we not rejoice? All things shall now work together for good to them who love thee, and are beloved of thee. And so, what we cannot find in wandering thought, nor in the mazes of reasoning; what we cannot by searching find out without God, nor even in God, that we know by faith in divine love. And we rest in thee, and rejoice in thee. We rejoice alike in storm and in calm; in light and in darkness; by day and by night; in things troubled, and in things tranquil. Wherever we are—at home, or wandering wide among strangers; sick or well; prospered or turned over and over, as the leaf is whirled by the tempest, whatever befalls us is right. For all of life is but a little price for seeing thee by and by, and being in thy image, and being satisfied.

And we rejoice, O Lord our God, that we have the privilege of this faith, and that we may rest upon it, and trust all our hope, and our very souls to it.

Now, we pray that, as thou art love, so more and more the lineaments of our Father's face may appear to us. And grant, we pray thee, that we may be able to bring the spirit with which thou art ruling the heaven above, into our own hearts and households. Grant that we may be able more perfectly to love one another—to love one another with the disinterestedness of divine love, and with something of the divine patience, and with something of the divine richness. May we grow in that direction more and more.

Grant, we pray thee, that all households may be households of love. And more especially we pray, this morning, that thy dear servants who have come hither into our midst, and have, before their brethren, dedicated these children to the Lord Jesus Christ, promising to bring them up in the fear of God, and in the ordinances of the sanctuary, may never fail in their intentions. May they have wisdom and grace ministered to them, to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. May their children's lives be spared unto them. And yet, if it is best that they should fly away before the summer is over, we pray that they may fly as birds, and sing in the branches of the tree of life. And so may they sing that their

*Immediately following the baptism of children.

bereaved parents shall hear by faith their call, and come toward them every day, step by step, sure that they are nearer to all that they have loved and all that is gone before.

If there be any in the congregation who are bereaved of their children, and whose hearts are touched, this morning, by the sight of these sweet faces, that bring back recollections of their own, we pray that upon them may rest the cooling dew of divine comfort, and that God may be very near to speak consolation to them to-day.

If there be any who are mourning over their children, and are anxious for them, and are pained or troubled in their behalf, help them, dear Saviour, to-day, to stand in the midst of their brethren and realize the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God, and to cast their care upon him. For why should we cast those cares on God which are as the light dust of the road, and withhold those cares which, like the rocks, do crush us? May every one know how to cast heart-cares, and inward cares, and unspeakable cares, and sorrows, and troubles, upon God, who loves and cares for all his creatures.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that children may grow up in right ways in our midst, walking in the footsteps of their parents, in so far as their parents are following Christ. We thank thee that there are so many in our midst who have been taught to serve thee, and that there are so many who have grown up in our sight and are walking in the ways of virtue and integrity and piety. We pray that thou wilt grant a blessing upon them, and upon their children, and upon their children's children.

And we pray thee that thou wilt grant that all the members of this congregation may live and be converted, and have the presence of God their Father.

We pray that thou wilt sanctify all the afflictions that are sent upon us in thy providence—all losses; all bereavements and confusions; all labor in overmeasure. Whatever pressure is hard to be borne, whatever thing is too sharp for our patience, answer us, if we pray for its removal, "My grace shall be sufficient for thee." Oh! for that grace which is forgiving and victorious! Oh! for that grace which redeems life while we have it, and redeems it while it is passing away! Oh! for that grace which shall make death itself to us the sound of joy, that we may through it meet our God.

And now we pray that thou wilt bless us in the further service of the sanctuary—in speaking, in reading, and in all that we shall be called to do. And wilt thou bless all thy people who are gathered together to-day, wherever they are. And more and more may the fruit of the Gospel abound. May the preaching of thy servants be leavened with the Spirit of God, sent down from on high. If any of them are in difficult places, if any are in sickness and poverty and discouragement through lack of fruit, may they labor still by faith, persevering.

Grant us, this day, a special blessing of heart. As outward things are denied us, more abundantly may we have inward riches through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We pray for all the States in this nation—especially for those that are new, and for those that are struggling to lay the foundations of future days. Grant that schools and churches may spring up everywhere and minister to them and sanctify them. Grant that everywhere, all over this land, justice may prevail. More and more may it be humane. More and more may it be the justice of love. We pray that thou wilt make this great people, not greedy of power, not avaricious of wealth, but to desire truth, and purity, and righteousness, and liberty, and intelligence, and piety over all the earth. May we be strong, not for destroying, but for blessing. Let us be rich, not for luxury and selfishness, but for beneficence. And may this great land, calling itself Christian, be Christ's indeed.

And look upon the nations of the earth. Oh! grant that the time may speedily come when thou canst afford to sheath thy sword. Grant that the

day may so soon come of knowledge and of justice among men, that thou shalt not be obliged to chastise them with burning flames. May wars cease, and the provocations and causes of war, and all nations at last study the welfare one of another, and the whole earth be redeemed.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

THE HEAVENLY STATE.

For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.—MATT. xxii., 30.

You will recollect that this is a part of the discussion, or series of discussions, which grew up in Jerusalem, and during the progress of which every one of the schools, and almost every one of the factions had their turn in propounding to Christ their difficult questions. The philosophy of the Jews consisted largely to the whole Oriental people, of puzzles, and riddles, and enigmas, and proverbs, and dark sayings—little curiosities of ingenuity which represented no solid and substantial truth.

Here is a specimen of the way in which they taught—for this was considered to be very sound by the profound of the Sadducees, who did not believe that there was resurrection; who professed to follow conscientiously the Jewish Scriptures, and to be the truest of the representatives of Moses and his institutes. According to the system of the Jews, by which the property was to be kept in the several families of the tribe, if a man died, his widow was taken to his next brother, and she became his wife; for polygamy was permitted, in the early Jewish history at any rate. So they propounded a case. There were seven brothers, and in turn they all conveniently died, for the purpose of the story, and the woman passed from one to another, and became, in succession, according to this system of the Jews, the wife of each. "Now," say they, "in the other life whose shall she be?—for all seven had her." The answer of the Saviour was this, substantially: "You are a set of ignorant fools!" It was couched in other language, but it came to that. He said, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." It was saying, in other words, "Ye blunder; and the ignorance of your stupid blunder is two-fold—first, from a want of knowledge of your own Scriptures, and second, from a lack of understanding the law of things—the everlasting law of nature—that is, the power of God." "For," said he, "in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God."

SUNDAY MORNING, Oct. 9, 1870. LESSON: REV. V. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection) Nos. 1258, 1272, "Shining Shore."

Well, how is that? He did not say. He likened them to the angels, but did not tell us how the angels were. It was rather negative. He declared that one potential, universal part of the economy of human life, with all its incidents and concomitants, stopped at the grave. This is the part of man out of which multitudinous history, good and bad, is derived. But useful as it is, it ceases, and does not go on into the other life; and it seems very natural, since man is a double being, born for this lower life, in transition and formation for a life to come, that a portion of the powers or faculties which fit him especially for this lower life, when they shall have performed their function, will, as it were, like the calyx of a flower, wither and fall back, and that into the other life we shall carry only those parts of our nature which are highest and noblest, and which have relation to the spiritual rather than to the physical.

Therefore the reply of our Master to this question in reference to the future state is not only remarkable for what it says, but is quite as remarkable for what it leaves unsaid. For both here and everywhere you will be struck, when you come to analyze it in the light of modern inquiries and modern knowledges, with how little is actually taught us in respect to the other state, in the Bible. It is declared that Christ "brought life and immortality to light," as he did; but he certainly did not reveal them in all their metes and bounds, nor in their regnant philosophy.

It is affirmed here that the Old Testament recognizes the existence of men after death. "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." He knew that they were Sadducees, and that they held the doctrine that there was no resurrection of the dead, and therefore no immortality; and they based it on the Scriptures. And his declaration to them that they erred in that philosophy, because they did not understand the Old Testament Scripture on which it was based, must, it seems to me, be taken as affirming that in his judgment the Old Testament Scriptures did recognize a future existence. This may seem strange to any who have never thought of it; but an examination of the question will show you that it almost required some such affirmation as this to give us liberty to believe that the Old Testament Scriptures did teach any such thing. For the question of continued existence is only *recognized* in the Old Testament. It is not taught there. And from the beginning of that first dispensation to the end of it; from the opening chapter of Genesis to the closing chapter of the record of the Old Testament, the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, of immortality in bliss or of penalty in the other life, is never once explicitly taught. But a great many times it is recognized. And you will perceive that this makes a great deal of differ-

ence. There can be no question, it seems to me, that a dim faith did exist.

The reasoner who wrote the Hebrews—Apollos, probably—is arguing on the subject of the faith of the patriarchs, when he declares that they endorsed what they did, not with reference to things seen, but with reference to something coming; this indicates that they had a glimmer of faith. It breaks out still stronger in the Psalms; and in the later prophets it becomes more and more luminous. And if the question were this, Is it to be believed that the advanced moral spirits of the Old Testament history had a faith in continued existence; and that this continued existence followed the two lines of joy and sorrow, according to the foregoing character? then I think there should be no two opinions about it: for I believe they did have these glimpses and these intimations. But then, were these truths ever wrought into authoritative statements, and by inspiration made to be part and parcel of the truth, touching all the institutes of Moses and the prophets? No, no; nowhere; not once. So far from it, you may read the first five books of Moses through from beginning to end, and you shall not find one hint of it. It is an astounding fact, that that economy for the government of nations and men, including both their political and religious institutions and their history—the whole Mosaic economy—lies open before us, and there is not a single instance in which a motive is addressed to man drawn from his immortality. There is not in the Old Testament a single instance in which an authoritative motive is addressed to the human heart, saying, "If you do this, you will after death be punished;" nor is there a single instance in which it is said, "If you live thus, after death you shall go on forever and forever."

There were men in the Old Testament times who believed it, but it never became a part of the authoritative canon; and never was it a motive, either of sin or virtue in the Old Testament way of teaching men. On the contrary, all the motives were drawn from secular things. Virtue shall bring in this life its reward, and wickedness shall bring its punishment—this is the key-note of that sublime drama of Job in which, arguing from that basis, the friends of Job said to him, "Since wickedness is punished in this life, and virtue in this life is rewarded, and since you are horribly punished, it must be that you have been horribly wicked. And it is quite in vain for you to say that you have not been, and to appeal to your open life. You have been a hypocrite, and have hid your conduct: but God has found it out; and that is the reason why you are now suffering." We should suppose that under such circumstances Job would have said, at once, "Good conduct in this life does not always get its reward, but waits for it until the life to come." We should suppose that Job would have said,

"Here we are in a growing state, and we only come to the leaf or the blossom at best: in the other life we come to the fruit." In any answer to the charge that he must be wicked, because rewards and punishments were confined to this life, we should suppose that Job, if he had known it, would have said indignantly, not only that the charge was false, but that the reasoning upon which the charge was based was also false. You could not imagine a modern Job. You could not imagine a man in our day who would rest under such a charge as that. Ten thousand men live in these times, borne down by obloquy, made dark by suffering, denied everything that life has to make it sweet and noble; and yet you and I revere them. Why? "Ah!" we say, "they bear sorrow and suffering for virtue's sake; and their coronation shall come hereafter." But Job's future is black. There is not a single luminous point in that direction in the whole book of Job. And the Old Testament economy, while its saints did unquestionably recognize, individually, for themselves, the truth of continued existence after death, and had some vague notion of virtue, never took that great truth up into itself as a part of its doctrine, and never wrought it into its theology, and never made it a canon or a motive from beginning to end.

A great many men ask whether a man can be a Universalist, and be a Christian. Let them first ask the question, "How could it be that God should ordain an economy in which the doctrine of future rewards and punishments was never once taught?"

This reply of our Saviour, I repeat, is remarkable in what it says, and it is remarkable, also, in what it leaves unsaid. That will be unfolded in the progress of this discourse. For I proceed, after these prefatory remarks, to speak of the general method of Christ and his disciples, in the new dispensation, of teaching us concerning the great future. What was the method of instruction adopted by Christ and his disciples, in regard to those principles that in his hands first came into authoritative disclosure, and were taught as positive truth?

1. They did not undertake to teach specifically or philosophically or physiologically, respecting the heavenly state. There is no attempt in the New Testament to determine whether heaven is a condition or a place. That is left for our modern speculation. There is nothing taught in the Old Testament history with regard to the relations of this condition or place to the universe,—nothing specific; nothing definite; nothing that enlightens us in regard to the New Jerusalem; nothing which answers to the instruction given later, in respect to the promised land to which we are going.

Christ and the apostles did not unfold the internal economy of the heavenly state. There is no account given of its materials, of its econ-

omies, of its occupations, of its government, and of the real, unfigurative flow of the experience of those that are there. You may misunderstand the statement as I now give it, but you will not when I shall have done with it.

A thousand questions, therefore, are not answered, which thousands of not unnaturally inquisitive spirits now ask respecting the heavenly state. What changes will pass upon our own nature?—this is an inquiry which many would fain have solved. Instructed more in psychology, we reason more than the ancients in respect to that which relates to ourselves. We have more knowledge to base reasoning upon. What will be the effect of death upon these minds? Are we to go into the heavenly state in these bodies? Paul declares expressly, No. "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God." According to his declaration, there shall be a form which corresponds to these bodies, though it shall not be these bodies. And how one can believe in the absolute resurrection of a physical body, I cannot understand, when the apostle bars all such ideas as that, by explicitly declaring that there shall be no flesh and blood in the kingdom of God. Take all my flesh and blood away, and I think there would be very little of me left for heaven. And that phrase was meant, unquestionably, to exclude physical matter. But what shall be the bodies that are to be like our present bodies, but shall not be these bodies? You know as well as I, or anybody else, that has not been taught.

If one has sent from his arms an infant child, do not you suppose he has followed that child with myriads of thoughts? How will it find its way there? Will the angels know it and take care of it? Will it be an infant when it reaches heaven? Will it grow as it would have grown if it had remained upon the earth? What is the history of children that go to heaven? There is not a line that throws any light upon these questions in the New Testament.

Will friendships continue there? There are intimations, I do not doubt. I do not doubt that there are a great many things bearing upon this subject which are taught in the New Testament, as I shall show you by and by. But there is not one single line in the New Testament which explicitly states any thing about it.

What will be our employments in the heavenly land? Nothing is said about it. For, surely, we do not suppose that the figures of the Apocalypse, some of which I read this morning in your hearing, were meant to represent the absolute employment of the redeemed, and that we are to be set up in ranks, and at stated times make bows, and all the rest of the time sing. A man must have gone crazy upon symbolism to suppose anything like that. The employments of the heavenly state are not revealed to us. In short, the questions raised here in

regard to our future condition are answered mostly thus, "Ye do not understand the power of God, and the scriptures, in regard to the resurrection." St. John, the very one who wrote the Apocalypse, with all its magnificent figures, after declaring in flaming zeal, "We are the sons of God," said, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." St. Paul, in speaking of that very thing, said, "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then"—then only—"face to face." And in the Apocalypse, where some figures most touching, because drawn from the very depth of human experience, are employed, it is said, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." Great change!

So you will see—and you will see a great deal more specially than I can make it appear by this brief representation, if you will follow up your researches—that it is not the method of Christ or his disciples to give what may be considered philosophical or physiological knowledge covering the whole ground of the nature of heaven, or the nature of our occupations and conditions when we shall reach it.

2. We are not, however, to suppose that the heavenly existence is practically annihilated, and all comfort taken from the belief of it, because it is left vague. On the contrary (not to insist, as by and by I shall more particularly, upon the fact that it is impossible for us to understand these things till we reach a different point of unfolding) I affirm that the methods by which these great truths and realities are actually taught, are better adapted to promote effort, and zeal, and endurance than they ever would have been if laid open, analyzed and set forth in specific form, with reference to details and principles. For they are now addressed to our imagination.

Is that, do you say, more unsatisfying? Nay, it is the way in which children learn all things that are above them. For the imagination is the very door through which the child sees, before it emerges from childhood, the things which are beyond it. It is the very way in which common, ignorant people help themselves, where they have no science, and no special knowledge.

I have sat on the summit of Mount Holyoke, and looked out over the Connecticut Valley, and seen as entrancing views as ever comforted the heart of man, poet though he might be; and yet, if you had asked me, "What is in that field?" I could not have told you whether it was wheat, or rye, or grass, or corn. If you had asked me "What is that village?" I could not have told you. I could just see a white glimmer among the green trees, but that was all. If you had asked me, "Who are those men working yonder?" or "What are they doing?" I could not have told you. I could see men that seemed to be

about the size of ants crawling over the surface of the ground; but whether they were mowing, or hoeing, or walking, or running, I could not tell. The whole picture lay before me, magnificent, and quickened every spring of fancy, and comforted my heart; but I could not give much idea of its horticulture, or agriculture, or anything that went to make up the interior of its life.

A young man goes abroad, and finds in retirement the child of a noble mother, thoughtful, patient, gentle, true, most loving; with a nature which interprets all things; without much schooling, and yet wise; and he wins her; and she, a maid from the village, is to be carried home to his father's mansion—for he is a child of wealth, and lives afar off. She wonders, from day to day, as they travel, what that home shall be, until at last they draw near to it, and, leaving the cars, and taking other conveyance, they come in sight of the residence of his father. And on some fortunate hill-top, he stops and says, "Do you see, westering, just in front of that swell and roll of the forest, in the midst of those orchards and gardens, that white gleam? Do you see the gable which rises between those two trees, which the sun strikes, and from which the reflection comes so magnificently? That is my father's house." With those words, what a sense of its beauty, what a sense of its richness, what a thrill of delight, goes through her heart! Yet she has seen neither the mother, nor brother, nor sister; but all images are brewing in her mind. She sees a thousand things. When she goes there she will not see so many things with her eyes as now she sees by her imagination. She creates them. She fills the house. She fills the garden. She walks in thought through those cool arbored groves. She sees and multiplies the treasures of her future home. But when she gets there her visions must change. She probably will not have seen one thing right. Nevertheless, she will not be discontented nor disappointed. For the state in which she was, the imagination was abundantly sufficient; and when she got to the thing itself, the images which she had formed would not conflict one single particle with the realities.

Now, we are here as children, not competent to understand the things which lie in another life, beyond the reach of our experience. Therefore, all the instruction which is given to us on this subject is given to the reason through the imagination. All the instruction of the New Testament is given to us upon that method. It is the truth of God addressed to our hearts, I should say, through our imagination, rather than through reason. As long as we are in this world our heaven will be imaginary. We can have no other here. There is a real heaven which is better than we imagine—which is larger, nobler, brighter, more blessed in every part; nevertheless, that heaven which you, and

I, and every saint on earth, think of, is purely imaginary. It is a picture which each one of us has drawn.

I repeat, that heaven is a revelation to a man's heart through his imagination—not through his sensuous reason. In other words, that principle by which God refines the world; that faculty, and that group of faculties, by which civilization has always made progress—namely, the imagination—is the gate and door between the flesh, matter, physics, on the one side, and spirit on the other.

The imagination, I think, is the angel of resurrection to the soul in the process of development. It is through the imagination that men learn to sublime matter into invisible forms, and fashion things not seen into things that are as if they were seen. It is by the imagination that one conceives of something better in every act than the thing itself; so that he is able to idealize moral excellences, so that they grow larger and larger in his conception. It is the refining element, the interpreting element, the inspiring element, that gives to every man aspiration. Because the imagination is not a measuring quality, because it is not a mathematical quality, because it has not exactitude, men despise it; and we are taught that it is fanciful, and that it is not safe to build on it. But I aver that in the economy of God's providence the human race has been instructed more through the imagination than through the reason. And it will be so to the end. And I aver that in respect to a range of topics that is more important to us than any other, it is the only teaching through which we can be instructed. It is not by statistics, but by the imagination, with pictures forever globing into new forms of beauty, forever changing, never twice alike, and yet always doing the one work—invigorating, inspiring, translating men higher and higher—that God teaches us things which we cannot reach through our experience, or otherwise know anything about.

This gives us the key to the scriptural teachings in regard to the future. They are addressed, as I have said, a little to the reason, but mostly to the heart, to the affections, through the imagination. The judgment scenes which are dramatically set forth in the Gospels are designed to be symbolic.. I do not mean that they are pretences. I merely mean that the judgment itself, which I believe will take place, will not take place literally and absolutely just as it is stated. The statement is a pictorial representation; but that pictorial representation was designed (and it has always answered that design) to raise up the conception of a transcendent finality in which justice and injustice, right and wrong, should part company, and take respectively their own spheres. The scene itself is pictorially represented. Not that these very things will happen; but that a scene will appear which these symbolize, and which the imagination must enlarge and fill up, and vary as well.

This is specially true in respect to the conditions of heaven and hell, as they are set forth in the Bible. Neither of them is to be interpreted according to its figures literally. We are not to suppose that there is a place of literal fire and brimstone. I do not believe it; you do not believe it; and we ought not to believe it, any more than we believe that heaven is paved with golden paving stones. Nobody believes that literally. If men did believe it there would be more misers anxious for their souls' salvation! Heaven and hell are represented by such figures, not because they are literal representations, but because they are the things which will have most potential influence on the imagination. That is the key-note of Scripture teaching. No statistical methods are employed, but those methods which address themselves to man's creative faculties—to his fancy.

Let us look for a moment at heaven as we find it described in the Bible. Let us see what the method is by which it is set forth to us. In general, we are taught that man continues to exist hereafter, and that the good exist in a state of happiness, and that that place or condition is called *heaven*. But how much do we know about it, literally and technically? What do we know of its geography, its history, its philology, its industry, or its economic relations? How little we know! and yet how much we know! How large a space it occupies in our thoughts and feelings! and how much more power has it than this great globe on which we tread, if we are alert in our moral nature! All the figures which have power upon the human imagination have been sorted, as it were, have been selected, and have been, in one way or another, employed in the New Testament to describe heaven. The thing itself is indescribable. We have no faculty nor means, by which to understand it. If the actual thing were stated to us, it would be as though it were not stated, because we cannot comprehend it; on the same principle by which I explain to my little three or four year old child the process of an eclipse. If I were to say to him, "Oh, the moon was going out one night, and it saw the sun, and it wanted to be roguish, and so it ran right before the sun, and threw the shadow of itself—a big cloak—all over the sun, and the sun did not like it a bit, and the moon laughed and ran on," the child would have some conception of an eclipse, although the figure shows two roguish persons, one throwing his shadow over the other. But suppose, instead of that, I should make an exact calculation of the causes of the eclipse, and should show the figures to the child? In this case I should perfectly confound him by the truth; and in the other case I should enlighten him by fiction. A fiction is oftentimes nearer the truth than the truth itself—not absolutely, but relatively to the day and condition in which we are living. And there is no book in the world that

ever employed partial things, and fables, and parables, and make-believe truths, and beautiful stories wrought out of fancy, so much as the Bible—that very book which has fashioned so many good men who are afraid to read a novel. It is full from beginning to end of fiction for the sake of fact, because, in the relatively undeveloped state of the human mind, it is true that fiction oftentimes brings a man nearer to the truth, because it assimilates to something that he knew before, and always leads from that something which he knew before to something to be known; and it is the shadow of what you do know that throws its interpretation over to what you do not know.

All the experiences which the human race has evolved of power, of joy, of happiness, and of purity, are employed in the New Testament, like so many pigments, to make the great picture of the heavenly state. All that men have learned to estimate in riches is gathered up, and all the splendor that there is in art is employed, to throw light upon the heavenly state. All that there is that is impressive to the imagination of men, and august in courts and crowns and sceptres—in short, all that there is in royalty; all the glory that there is in warriors, whether suffering or victorious, will be found in the list of the figures that represent the heavenly state. All the cheer of music goes up there. All the raptures of love report themselves there. All the beauty of trees and of gardens; all that there is in rivers and mountains; whatever there is in the city or in the country; nature itself—all these will be found first or last to represent the heavenly state. All elements of wonder produced upon the mind by the supernatural are got together to throw their train of lights and shadows upon the great vague Hereafter. Thus the heavenly state is represented to us by taking, as it were, all the elements that men have learned to esteem as indicative of power, and grandeur, and glory, and purity, and then making a heaven out of them.

Bring me, if you please, one of Titian's most magnificent pictures—the Martyrdom, or the Assumption, or any of those master-pieces on which his fame stands. I look at it, and say to my companion, "What is that?" "That," he says, "is the Virgin." "What is that deepest and most glowing of reds?" "That is her gorgeous robe." "What is that exquisite blue, further up, on her shoulders?" "That is her scarf." "What is that green that I see behind her?" "That is a tree with leaves on it." "What is it that I see through the tree?" "That is the sky." No, it is not. I go up to the picture and scrape it, and that red is nothing but pigment; and that blue is nothing but a little metal and oil. There is no robe and no scarf there at all. I scrape off one of those leaves, and there is no juice in it. It is metal and oil, and that is all. And that sky—you can pinch it, and scratch it, and

crumble it in your hand. It is all dirt—nothing but dirt. And yet, out of these base substances, by the cunning hand and imagination of the artist, is wrought a picture such that, when you look upon it, you never will think of what it is made up of—you will not see the pigment, nor the metal, nor the oil. These things, to the looker on, are garment, are face, are flesh. They seem to be a living being clothed in beautiful garments, though in reality they are but dead matter.

All the world is a vast pallet, and all human experiences are so many pigments, and the method of teaching which God pursues, in the New Testament, is that he, as the sublime Artist, takes this pallet of universal experience and draws in gorgeous colors the lines and lineaments of the heavenly state. And the things which he uses are all earthly, and are not to be reproduced in heaven, though the things which they represent to us are heavenly. The materials out of which our conceptions spring are earthly experiences; but the effect of the conceptions, when combined with the Spirit of God upon the imagination of man, is to reveal to him, and bring him into sympathy with, the invisible and spiritual life, as it could be done by no philosophical process. He who knows aught of heaven, therefore, knows it altogether through the experience and interpretation of his imagination.

In general, it may be said that by these methods of great and wondrous truth which we learn in regard to heaven, is set forth the sweet and beautiful nature of God, whom some have worshipped as a devil, some as a terrific thunderer, some as a bloody hero, and some as an august and terrible emblem of justice, crushing unmercifully. At last we see God enshrined in the midst of joy, and purity, and transcendent bliss. He himself gives the light. There is no need of the sun. There is no need of the moon. All natural laws may cease, because their Prototype is there. And as the earth itself is but the expression of divine thought, and its life is but the expression of the divine law, so when we rise above it altogether into the heavenly state, we shall find that God is nature; and that all things are in him; and that nature is perpetual summer, perpetual garden, perpetual feast, perpetual joy, perpetual bliss, and benediction forever and forever. That truth we have learned. But how? By making it up out of all these scattered images. We come to that conception of God through these varied experiences. It is in this way that we learn the blessedness of manhood. For the representation of heaven is not that you are going to be happy. You that are sucking out happiness in this world; you paupers that are running after happiness, like a beggar with his hat, for a dole; you in youth that are running after happiness; you that in middle age are running after happiness, heaven is not meant to complete that fantasy, and leave you to feel that you are just to be happy. Heaven teaches you

that when manhood has been perfected by endurance and suffering, when it has been washed by tears and blood, and is redeemed and brought into its true estate, then it is blessed, as God is blessed. Heaven is the place where God is revealed in the plenitude of his power and glory, and where true manhood is interpreted to us in its glory.

It is further revealed (and the revelation is cautionary, as it were) that the heavenly land is one in which former things shall have passed away; in which the peculiar besetments and trials and incidental relations that shall have existed in this world will have disappeared.

We have a new state, a new life, a new chance. The particulars we do not know. What we do know is that it will be intensely active, and transcendently satisfying. And this knowledge ought to be a satisfaction in this life.

So much is the substance of that which is taught of the heavenly state. I might make it rich by endless combinations and specifications; but this is the general ground. It covers the revelation of the nature of God, and the revelation of the coming nature of man, and the revelation of the effacement of all the things with which we are most sadly acquainted in this world, and the substitution of the things which are the most rapturous and joyous in the world to come.

3. From this structural view, we may derive an idea of the uses to which we can put heaven, and also of the uses to which we can put the word of God. What a fantastic history is that of the interpretation of the enigmatical books of the Bible? And what a strange literature there is afloat—I beg pardon, literature which will not float, but whose intrinsic gravity carries it to the bottom in every age! One would think, to hear some persons interpret Daniel, and the symbols contained in that book; one would think, to hear some men preach on these prophetic symbols and interpretations, "I do not know that I shall be able to see, or hear, or eat, or drink naturally. It seems to me that it is a phantasmagoria which fits a man for a celestial lunatic asylum!" Take the prophecy in respect to the beasts and their horns, and their tongues, and their eyes; take the various parts of the Apocalypse, and the various accounts of fantastic commentators, and see what work has been made in attempting to reduce these pictures to physiological ideas and statistical facts. Suppose a man should undertake to reduce the writings of John Milton to the language of mathematics, what sort of poetry would he have? Suppose one should take the productions of Keats or Tennyson and interpret them into the language of statistics, and prune everything down, and bring everything within the limits of bald, bare, barren facts? Would there be anything left of the poetry? Would you see what the poet meant that you should see? Would you not be cheated and fooled? What are these prophecies, these pictures

of the Apocalypse? They are what not long ago the North star was to the poor fugitive slave, who followed it, and saw in it liberty. He did not know what the orb was. All he knew was, that so long as he followed it bondage lay behind and liberty lay before. And he prayed, "O God! let me never be without this star." And he followed it, and found freedom.

Now, the Apocalypse is, so to speak, God's northern lights. All the auroral glory of heaven seems to flash out in these various symbolisms. What have I, to teach the doctrine of the future state? Not the language of philosophical fact. But to tell me that there is a heaven, and that it is more glorious and transcendent than the heart of man can conceive, is to fire my imagination, and to fill it with gorgeous pictures, and to pervade it with such an inflammation that it never can rest, crowning my fancy more than it awakens my reason. That which gives reason its glory and its beauty is the imagination. That is the most refining and civilizing faculty, and traces of it abound in these prophetic books. And although they are incidental, they may reveal important facts relating to the future, which otherwise would remain obscure. And it was not so much statistics that the divine Spirit wanted to give, as it was fire to the imagination, which should awaken faith in God, in hope, in love, in manhood, while amid the disturbances of this world—in the midst of its groans and anguish. It was necessary that there should be somewhere rejoicings among the cryings of earth. If there were wadings in blood on earth, there ought to be somewhere garments washed white in blood. If there were tears, there should be somewhere a Father who took in his everlasting arms his children, and wiped the tears from their eyes, and set them down everlastingly where tears should come no more.

But none of these visions of the coming glory are literal. There are no literal gates of pearl. There is no literal sea of glass. There is no literal pavement of gold. But ah! what is a great deal better, these figures of the heavenly land come with rejoicing and real happiness; and they teach us of the estate which we long for, and look forward to. It is not enough that I get from other sources. My manhood will not explain itself. I shall not die when I die; and everything in me that is most noble—my reason and my moral sense—goes, on the wings of these mighty pictures of the imagination, triumphing over darkness, and saying, "Light, *light*, LIGHT for me! Let those go to the bat that will. I go to the empyrean."

A true use, then, of Scripture, is not to be made by going to it with a literal representation of its symbols, after they have become by use worn out. The great trouble with symbols is that they first help, and then hinder. When they are new and fresh, they interpret new

ideas to us; but after they have done it a certain time, they cease to do it, and become objective themselves, and we see the symbol—not the truth. It is quite possible for the Bible to stand right in the way of the understanding of the Bible. If a man comes to think of heaven, not according to this principle which I have explained, through the general interpreting of the spirit and state of it, and he is constantly thinking about palms, and crowns, and harps, and harpers, he comes at last to believe that they are actually true. And so he has used the Bible in such way that it has defeated itself.

A true use of Scripture, therefore, is to repeat its process, with the materials which belong to our age and civilization; to do over again in our day, and with the things which are the noblest and best to us, just what the seer did in his day by the things which were best to that age of the world. Some things will continue to be best to the end of time. There are some things in the Apocalypse that have become glorious, and that are worthy of a place on the pallet. But our conceptions must have in them fewer princes. I do not myself think so much of princes. Heavenly princes may be good, but earthly princes do not give me the conception of heavenly princes. When I read of crowns, it does not produce much impression on my mind; for I have seen them. Neither is much impression produced on my mind by reading about thrones; for I have sat down in some of them. I have a very poor idea of thrones, and a poorer idea yet of those men that press them. I am a republican. God, by his providence, has given me a very different conception of dignity and manhood from that which was held by the oriental nations. And while, in a large part of the civilized world, crowns and princes are doing a great deal of real service to you and me, democratic republicans—or republican democrats!—other figures must come in to crutch up these infirm ones. Time has riddled them, and let their glory out. There are more of the common people that want less aristocrats, fewer palaces, more cottages, less oriental sensuous gorgeousness, more simple domesticity, less being governed,—not less government, but more *self* government.

The glory which God has unfolded of himself, the developments of later times to us, will go further to interpret the heavenly state than even the antique figures. I hold that it is the the duty of Christians to imitate, not the letter, but the spirit, of revelation. As the method of revelation was to teach us of the heavenly state, by appealing to the imagination, and gathering figures that would represent power, and purity, and excellence of every kind, so we may, when we wish to fashion a heaven for our edification, gather up all the elements which to us are transcendent, whether they be scriptural or not. We are not restricted in this regard. We are at liberty to make our own

heaven. The maiden has a right to make a heaven that will represent to her purity, power, heroism, goodness and grandeur, in their most ideal forms. And the mother may construct her heaven out of the materials which God has gathered about her experience. And it is a part of the liberty of the Christian to interpret for himself the shining way, and the glorious city that stands at the head of it. And it were well for us that we had more fruitfulness, and were not tied up to an eternal repetition. "He that sticks at the letter sticks at the bark," is the old Latin proverb; and I say that he who sticks at words, and keeps them, in these Apocalyptic visions, not only "sticks at the bark," but loses that living principle by which every man may make a vision which shall bring heaven nearer to him than any other man's figure.

It may seem shocking for me to say that, if you please, you may, instead of taking the pictures employed by Scripture to represent heaven, take your own images and figures, and make your own heaven; but you do it, after all. When you were young, your heaven was purely scriptural; but it is not so any longer. When you think of heaven now, the Mary that comes to your mind is not a Mary of the Apocalypse, but that darling Mary who first brought you toward heaven. She went up to the spirit land, and there she shines; and since she has been there heaven has had one thing in it which you never read of in the Bible. And after your own old father, prophet, priest, lover and friend to you, and the benefactor of all who came within his influence, went thither, you have never thought of heaven without pushing aside one of the old symbols, and putting this new one in its place. Your daughter is there, and your father is there; and your brother goes next, and your sister next; and the old neighbor goes, and the dear matron goes; and heaven begins to get full of people that you have known; and pretty soon you will find that you have a heaven formed out of your own experience, with the aid of your imagination. And yet, if I tell men that this is the thing to do; if I tell them that they may form their own conception of the heavenly land, not setting aside the Bible, but taking a hint from it, and proceeding according to its method, and calling into action the same moral qualities which it does, but employing illustrations and figures different from those which it employs, they are sometimes shocked. Nevertheless, God makes their hearts wiser than their heads. That is the case with a great many who otherwise would be absolute fools!

The reasons, then, of the indefiniteness of the teaching of the New Testament become apparent. I suppose that one of those reasons lies in the absolute impossibility of conveying a literal knowledge of heaven to us. There must be a pictorial representation of heaven, or we can gain no conception of it. We are not developed; we are not experi-

enced; we are far removed from the highest condition of those natures which we bear, and we are not prepared to see the things which belong to the spirit life. We see them as through a glass, darkly. Only by and by can we see face to face, and know just how heaven is.

The same thing exists among ourselves. For instance, the lower classes in society (by which I mean, not the poorer classes, but those who are less developed, the gross, the animal, and even the vicious and the corrupt) cannot interpret nor understand the higher stages of society. They cannot understand the real condition of a pure and virtuous and refined family. If they give their idea of it, you will see that they smouch it in their descriptions by their own vulgar notions. In other words, the bottom of society never can understand the top, although the top can understand clear down to the bottom. The higher development always judges that which is below it. Though the higher understanding always includes that which is below it, the lower never includes that which is above it. So that we cannot interpret that which is above us, though that which is above us interprets us.

But a moral reason might be given for this;—that if it were possible for men to understand the blessedness of the state that is to come, it might be a snare. It might enervate and invalidate the motives to virtue in this life. We are here to grow. We are here to learn. We are here to suffer. We are here to be wrought upon, and wrought in, and wrought out; and life is a growing place, a studying place, a suffering place. Whatever happens, you can be clean of lip and pure of heart. But after all, you are strangers and pilgrims. You are seeking for yourselves; but you will never find yourselves this side of the grave. No man lives here. We are only sojourners in this sphere. Our life is not perfected here. It is the ideal of honor, and truth, and purity, and fidelity, and love, that man should die fruitful and abundant as is the tree of life. It is the ideal of our higher selves—that is, our *real* selves. For, after all, that which we sleep with, and eat with, and walk with, and commune with, is not our true self. We are masked and hidden and imprisoned in the flesh. Our true self is coming hereafter.

That being the case, it were not wise that the heavenly state should be revealed to men. It were not wise that those things should be apparent, which, only foreshadowed, exercise the reason and the imagination. The true meaning of heaven to us is the certainty of general blessedness. For instance, "There remaineth a rest for the people of God." It is a certainty of satisfaction in the divine government and in the divine nature. We shall be satisfied when we see Him as he is. It is our refuge from sorrow. It is our great comfort and consolation, forecasting in this world. Above all, it is that which settles the endless inequalities of experience in this life. It is sure, and it is the only sure

thing. All things which are physical, and which men call substantial, are passing away. The things that are seen are transient, and the things that are unseen, and only those, are permanent. No great nature has ever lived through life and not felt that this world was insufficient for him. The world is big enough, and good enough, and rich enough for children till they have reached a certain estate; but the moment they begin to enter upon manhood, they are conscious of a desire for what are called romances and visions that the world will never satisfy. And the longer they live, the less they will be satisfied; and the probability is that they will grow misanthropic. Now the wine has turned to vinegar in a man when he becomes a misanthrope. And the next step is putrid fermentation, in wine or in men. And yet, every man is conscious that the more he knows men, the more he pities them; the more sorry he is for them; and the more charitable toward them. But, after all, consider what is the real condition of man, and of the human mind. All honors, one after another, are not less than honors; all pleasures, one after another, are not less than pleasures; but they do not go down into the deep places of human desire. And all these things are not sufficient to feed him when the growth of manhood brings hunger in his nobler nature.

It is necessary that we should stay ourselves with this faith: that there is a land where our whole heart shall be filled to overflowing, forever and forever; and that that land is heaven. You may fret, otherwise. You may find fault with the conditions of this life. Travelers find fault with taverns, and with railway carriages, and with stages, and with wagons; but they are foolish; for they are not going to live in them.

When I go to Europe I find fault with the ship, with the engine, and with the everlasting ocean; but then what do I do? I lie down on my back, and charge ten days to profit and loss, and wipe them out, and that is the end of it. But I know that when I get there I shall be paid a thousand times over for all I have suffered.

When a man is on the sea, and is sea-sick, he says, "I would not go through this another day for ten thousand continents, if I could help it;" but when he reaches land and sees one thing that is worth seeing, he says, "I would go ten voyages for the sake of seeing this." It is not wise for a man to put too much emphasis upon the incidental experiences of life.

Servants and landlords say that they can always tell how a man lives at home by the way he conducts himself abroad. If he finds fault with his food, they say, "It is because he has not good food at home"; and if he eats his food contentedly, "It is because he lives well at home". It means this, that a man who is used to good things, and knows that

he shall have them again, says, "What is the use of my finding fault with that which is disagreeable on the way. It is only for a moment. I shall go right back to everything that I need." And so he is a gentleman. A man that finds fault is not. And on the way heavenward, if you find fault with your house, and with your position in society, and with the table which God spreads for you, you are no gentleman. But if you are well bred, you are sons of God; and by this token it shall be known that you have, and you may be certain that you have, a Father's house, where you shall have experiences that will remove all these little inequalities. "This dust, this heaving ship, this sickness," you say, "is but for a moment; and why should I complain? It is but a mere speck, and not worthy of a thought. Mine is eternity; mine is heaven; mine is God."

So, too, not only is there comfort for the breaking up of our relationships on earth by death, but I declare to you that after having, by reason of my profession, pondered this subject to comfort mourners all my life long—during the thirty-five years of my ministry—I am more and more personally satisfied every single year, that if for this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable. And I tell you truly, that if I were to be convinced to-morrow that this is all a fiction, that there is no existence beyond the grave, I would seal my mouth with the seven seals of the Apocalypse, which no man could break open, before I would whisper that guilty disclosure. In this world of sin, he that takes away the hope of heaven, takes away the consolation of those that sorrow. There is nothing else that can comfort a heart crushed by bereavement and losses.

It is but for a moment. Out of my tree the bird has flown, and sings there no more. But it sits in the tree of life and sings, and I shall hear it again. I am alone; I have no counsellor; I am without a companion; I am heart-sick and life-sick—but what then? I shall find again all that I have lost, and more, and more blessedly. Sorrows, as storms, bring down the clouds close to the earth; sorrows bring heaven down close; and they are instruments of cleansing and purifying. I have seen many a man that was not true to his philosophy, and whose theory broke down at the side of the grave, because he could not endure the belief that he was burying what he had loved; and who said, "Is my child like a clock when some chance blow has passed through it? Is my child like a shattered clock, that kept time until it was struck, and then ceased, and shall never keep time again?" Never was there such an engine of torment as this world; never was there such a miserable thing as men with such susceptibilities, and in whom sorrows so beat like waves of the sea on the shore of experience, if there is no balm, no hope, and no future.

But now, with a heaven, my sorrows are but for a moment, and I comfort myself, and I carry my child again in my arms. The family that I have with me is not so large as the family that wait for me. The friends that are round about me are not so many as the friends that surely will give me a choral entrance into the heavenly land. And heaven is the comfort of bereavement. Those that are afflicted, and that bear the yoke for the sake of love, look up. There is a land of recompensing love; and out of that draw argument of patience and of gladness.

So the sadness of old age is greatly cheered and comforted by the same thing. Every man who sees a tree going into the winter, cannot, I suppose, if he has any sentiment, but have a certain sort of sadness. When looking out from my little cottage porch, I see the first change in the leaves, the first faint color, I always sigh, and say, "Ah! there it is; Autumn is coming." And Autumn, you know, means what comes after. It means brightness; it means gorgeous crimsons; it means magnificent browns, ochres, yellows; it means everything that is beautiful on the mountain, and in the sky, and on the field; but ah! do not I know that the sweet whispering breeze bringing to my senses the sound of the leaves of those trees, is but the precursor of that hoarse, harsh wind that is already traveling from the poles, and is to bring frost and snow? And when I see my noble old trees, that were so full of life of their own, and the life of birds in the summer, at last having shaken off their garments, and standing all bare, I cannot help feeling sad, and pitying them. But I know that there is a resurrection for them. They are not dead. They only sleep. When the spring comes again, the birds will come back and nest in them once more. And when I see the old drawing near to the grave; when I see those who have had part and lot in the affairs of life, obliged to go with feebler step, and obliged to perform fewer functions, my heart is filled with sadness for them.

When the time comes, which cannot be long delayed, dear friends, when you shall look upon me unable to stand in this place, with my grey hair white, and another preaching in my stead, and I with palsied hand shaking with age, and scarcely able to pronounce the benediction, you will say, "I remember him in the day of his strength. I remember what labors he performed, and how he spoke in loud and manly tones of instruction. But he is an old man, now; he is passing off, and others must take his place."

There is something very sad in that It is sad to me. It was sad to me to see it in my father. It is sad to you to see it in your father or your pastor. But it is with men as it is with trees. The time is not long from November to March. It is but a step from

old age into a youth that shall never know old age. It is only the outward part that is wasting; for, "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

This is the consolation of those that grow old. If you are going further and further from the bright things of the world, you are coming nearer and nearer to those brighter things which the world has helped you to interpret. Look up, and be willing that others should take your place. I am glad that I have had the chance to work, and have tried to put into my work such strength as God gave me; and when God calls me away, I shall go out of my work just as willingly as I came into it. For I have a heavenly home. Whatever may become of me, I have my hope laid up in heaven. That is my joy. That is my strength. That is my consolation in every trial. It is the continual interfusion of this hope and imagination of heaven, it is the light of the other sphere, that makes me cheerful and courageous and indomitable in the day of trial.

Christian brethren, do you make enough use of heaven? I do not rebuke, nor do I criticise the ways in which you are accustomed to look upon the spirit world. This is your matter. If I can help you I am glad, but if I cannot, you have the same liberty. He that has the true way of looking at heaven, will, I think, be better, stronger, more patient, more manly. He has no right conception of heaven whose heaven makes him effeminate. He has the true idea of heaven, whose heaven makes him bold, strong, enduring, sweet, gentle, humble, teachable, and Christlike.

And now may God grant that every one of us may look, not alone at the Scriptures, but through the Scriptures into life itself, that we may fashion to ourselves a companionable heaven, so near to us that it shall distil celestial influence upon us. May there be none in this great assembly who shall fail at last of heaven, without God and without hope, living in darkness and uncertainty in this life, dying blindly, and rising only to lose the heritage of eternal glory. How miserable a lot is that!—especially when all the powers above, all divine influences, have been shed forth that men may know, and that they may choose, and that they may take hold inseparably upon that better part which shall not be taken from them. A rest is promised. See that ye come not short of this rest through unbelief.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Through darkness and through light, through storm and through calm, knowing our way, or lost and searching it again, we are seeking our home, O Father! We are striving to rise above those temptations into which we were born, where is our apprenticeship, our school. We are striving, not to despise the flesh, and yet not to be subject to it; not to despise the riches of the beauty of the earth upon which we tread, and yet not to abuse it or to become enslaved to it. We are seeking to free ourselves from the thrall of passion, and yet not to lose the energy of the power which comes from it. We desire to behold the truths which cannot be seen by mortal eyes; and yet not to be carried away from the commerce of this world. Thou art unfolding in us a royal nature whose metes and bounds we do not discern; whose very path is unrevealed; but this we know, that as in summer, in light and heat, every plant, ignorant as it is, knows how to find its own full self, so if we are the children of light and love, thou thyself wilt develop in us the character most needed. We can help ourselves but very little. We can resist evil. We can take pains to get the light and come into thy presence. But we do not know the plan, and we do not know how to build, and we are surrounded with so many adverse influences that if it were not for our faith in thee, we should give up and drift as the currents carry us.

But now, O Lord our God, thou hast made us to believe that thou art. Thou hast taught us that thou art a God of love to all that accept thee in loving. And we have accepted thee. Thou art our Father, and thou shalt be our exceeding great reward. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt keep that which we have committed to thee, and which thou didst first commit to us—our souls. We believe that thou wilt fashion them so that through all imperfections and in spite of them, through all temptations and in spite of them, through all sins and in spite of them, and through weakness and infirmities, we shall at last come off victorious, and be received home, and be known there, as we are longed for already, and have our names mentioned. And we shall be as the sons of light, and shall go forth in an eternal liberty and power, the conception of which hath not entered upon time.

We are, O Lord God! still walking veiled. We feel in ourselves, at times, the motions of the gods; and yet we are dethroned; we are outcasts; we are exiled; we are without sceptre or crown—without kingdom or authority; we are waiting for our coronation. Thou, O Lord our God, wilt yet bring us home and crown us and instate us in power and purity and love and joy, forevermore.

And now we pray that we may have the faith of this coming love so strong that it shall throw down upon the glare of this life a tempering influence, that we may not be too much enamored of things seen, which perish in the using, nor too easily forget things unseen, which only are permanencies. We pray that thou wilt grant that we may have such a sense of coming gladness and joy in the land of rest, that we may not too much estimate the pleasures of this life, nor too greedily grasp after its riches, nor sacrifice too much for its honors. And yet we do not desire to be so much engrossed in the thoughts of the life to come that we shall take no pains with this life. We desire to be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord in the life that now is, that peradventure we may be admitted to the higher service and greater blessedness of the life that is to come. We pray that thou wilt help us out of our comforts and consolations to interpret all our disappointments by the way, and all our bereavements. As we see one and another staff and stay breaking, as one and another fountain grows dry, as one and another cord that vibrated snaps, and as we find ourselves strangers and pilgrims with growing need, O grant that we may not feel the desolateness of life and society to be evidence of the hopelessness of that for which we are living. Help us evermore to

live by faith and not by sight. How great is the company of those that surround us! How great are the clouds of victorious spirits that are our spectators! Who is there that hath not more than tongue can count of those spirits of love that wait and watch for him? We pray that our treasure, though it be invisible and yet unrealized, may make us glad, and that we may not be afraid of that outward poverty which men so much discsteem. And grant that if we be in weakness, and even in sickness, and cast down, and laid aside from the tasks of life, from the sight of men, we may yet live in the presence of that higher sphere where we are to be princes of power. And so may we nourish ourselves at the breast of the future. So may we fix our faith upon heavenly hope. So may we seek consolation in trouble from things that would mislead us. Grant that we may walk above the world while we are walking upon it. If our feet do tread the ground, may our head move among the stars. May we be lifted up so that we shall evermore hear the voices of time and the voices of eternity, and interpret the one in the language of the other, and measure all things below, not by the false measurings of men's imperfect judgment, but by the golden reed of thy sanctuary.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing upon us to-day. It hath already been a good day to our souls. The morning came as the opening of the temple of God. We have worshipped thee and rejoiced in thee. And we stand now to give thanks for the day, and still to hope that thou wilt shake the tree of life, and that its fruit may fall and be gathered through all the hours of this blessed day.

We pray for the children; and we beseech of thee that they may grow up in Christian families, with sweetness of temper and purity of conscience, and a lordly manliness—even that lordliness which comes from God.

We pray that thou wilt bless all parents, and especially those that are almost afraid of their task, and that come with awe and fear and trembling to the rearing of these immortals that thou hast given to them. We pray that thou wilt strengthen and guide them. For thou art their Father, even more gloriously than they are parents to their own children.

We pray that thou wilt bless all our efforts to instruct the rising generation. Bless our Sabbath school, and all its officers. Bless those who are gathered from our own midst and from the community at large into our schools and classes. We thank thee that the dews of divine grace have rested upon the young, and that so many are converted to God, and walk worthy of their vocation. And we pray that this year may be a year full of blessings—not outward blessings alone; not blessings to the eye, nor to pride, nor to vanity, but inward blessings—blessings of the heart; blessings which cleanse and lift men's natures and purify their souls. May the new birth pass upon many, and may there be the voices never ceasing in our midst of those who rejoice in the newness of life, and chant the praises of God who hath redeemed them by his own precious blood.

Bless all the Churches in our midst, and thy servants that minister in them. Be with all those that labor for the elevation of morals in these great cities, and for those who seek to inspire justice throughout our land, and for those who endeavor to stay the progress of corruption and to beat down the might of those who employ their power for greed.

We pray for all those men who love truth and virtue. May their voices rise higher than all other sounds; and into their natures may the power come; and may this nation learn what prosperity there is in righteousness, purity and peace. And while other nations are tossed to and fro as we have lately been; while they shrink with dread from the cup whose contents are blood, which we have but just taken to our lips, grant that we may not look upon them with a cold eye or an unsympathizing heart; but as even we cried out for ourselves, "How long, O Lord! how long?" so we call unto thee in behalf of the nations of the earth, and pray that thy pitying eye may look upon their adversity. O grant that the day may come when

knowledge and true religion shall destroy oppression and superstition, and all hurtful and hateful power, and when men shall learn to love one another, and the common people of the nations shall refuse to be led against their brothers, and the whole earth shall at last find peace and purity and gladness.

Grant these things, not because we are worthy to ask them, but for thine own name's sake. And to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Grant unto us, our Heavenly Father, that blessing which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow. Take us up into the bosom of thy love. Be to us, we beseech of thee, a tabernacle, a pavilion, where we may be hid till the storm is overpast. May we not trust to our own ingenuity, nor stand in our own natural firmness. May we live in God. May we know that we shall triumph in him. May we rest in God, and do good, and fear not. Grant more and more, as we grow older and need to have the world enlarged, that the horizon may move before us. Grant that the vision may so come near that we cannot tell where the earth stops or heaven begins; and that thus we may go from glory to glory, until we stand in Zion and before God.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."—MATT. XXV., 46.

Last Sunday morning I spoke to you of *Heaven*, showing the method of instruction which the sacred Scriptures adopt respecting the future spirit-world. Far less agreeable, but scarcely less important, is the teaching of HolyScripture in respect to *the future punishment of the finally wicked.*

The two grand truths—victorious virtue crowned with happiness, and wickedness overthrown, sad and suffering,—go through the New Testament as light and shadow wait on each other through physical nature.

The same method of representation is followed in depicting the future punishment of the wicked as in painting the joy of the righteous. A scientific accuracy is impossible. Our present life has not the terms or the experience which will interpret to us in the body the truths which are supersensuous, ethereal, and which imply development into a condition for which this state of being has only analogies, but no actual knowledge. All instruction in reference to the other state is therefore proximate and representative, and of necessity employs, not the scientific reason, but imagination and the reason under it. For the imagination is not merely a decorative fancy. It is the fundamental element and quality which constitutes faith. It is that faculty by which the soul is able to discern clearly invisible truth in distinction from material and sensuous truth. It is of prime importance in education. And no book of instruction in the world ever made larger use of imagination as the channel through which to give instruction than the Bible.

Intelligent commentators and preachers, recognizing the majestic beauty of the pictures of heaven, have long, and with almost unbroken consent, taught that these were not to be taken literally: they were addressed to the imagination, and designed to kindle hope, joy, and courage. And in the parallel of the suffering state hereafter, the same method of teaching exists. All the experiences which men have had

SUNDAY MORNING, Oct. 16, 1870 LESSON: MATT. XXV., 14–46. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 25, 732, 383.

of trouble, all the things which have in them the power of inflicting suffering, are marshalled to create in the soul a powerful conception of penalty. And *penalty* is the thing, and not the special method which these figures shadow out. Fire and brimstone, darkness or lurid light, the sword, scorpions, gnawing worms, storms, thunder and lightning, and, from the personal experience of men, fear, overthrow, despotic captivity, torments of thought and feeling—these, as it were, are simply the pigments which are employed to render a picture of the solemn fact that as sin and penalty are joined together in this life, so they are in the life to come; and that this conjunction of virtue with pleasure and sin with pain is part of a universal and everlasting constitution; and not peculiar to this life.

These figures are not, then, designed to be taken as literal facts. The taking them as such has worked immense mischief, and will work more. Yet they point to the invisible spiritual truths which will be to our soul hereafter what these pictures now are to our imagination. There will not be fire; and yet, there will be a quick sense of suffering of which the effect of fire is a fit suggestion. There will not be literal scorpions and gnawing worms; but thousands of men already know that there are feelings of remorse that gnaw the soul worse than ever worm gnawed the body. And these are but emblems of great spiritual truth; but the truths are spiritual, and not carnal nor sensuous.

1. There is not another teaching of the Bible that comes home to us as does this truth of punishment in the future life. On this subject men cannot keep down the heart while they are coolly weighing the evidence. Because, in the first place, it strikes the very soul of soul in each one. It strikes through uncultured fear. Or, if men be cultivated, and accept this truth, then all that which they gain by refinement, all the sense of personal worth, all the value of character, all estimate of magnitude in one's own being, is put at peril. And the sense of loss is more to those that are refined and cultured than to the ignorant can be the sense of fear. But it comes home to our affections, also. My brethren, it is one thing to read in the Bible the chapter as I read it in your hearing this morning, and other such passages, and another thing to ponder them in the face of a dead child. It may not be difficult for a theologian to sit in his chair and reason abstractly, rebutting and counter-thrusting in argument; but when he is called to follow his own son who, through a doubtful or an openly ignominious career, has gone out of life, it is not in human nature any longer to reason in the same calm mood. To apply this truth in the intensity of agonized love following its lost companion, like another Orpheus seeking Eurydice—these are things that bring this question home as almost no other ever is brought home to us.

It touches our benevolence, also, as applied to the vast mass of mankind, who certainly do not live according to the very lowest standard set up by the laxest moralist. If to be born again, if to begin to love, if to hate selfishness, if to begin a separation from our animal nature, are the conditions of joy in the future life, then how few of all the existing people on the globe have met those conditions! And yet, I will defy any man to look with a sympathetic heart out upon the masses that are moving more than all the leaves of the forests of the continent, and let the conviction pass his mind as even the shadow of a shade, without being utterly overwhelmed. A man can not have the susceptibility which is cultivated by the gospel of Christ, and then look boldly in the face the terrific application of this simple truth to the outlying masses of mankind, and not shiver and tremble with sensibility.

2. We are not surprised, therefore, to find that the educated Christian mind of all lands, for the last hundred years, has been changing, and that milder expressions and a very different spirit have prevailed. It is certainly true that theories have been changing from gross material representations more and more in the direction of moral representations. It is very true that this subject is not preached as it used to be —not as it was in my childhood. It has not been preached as often, nor with the same fiery and familiar boldness that it used to be. Multitudes of men who give every evidence of being spiritual, regenerate, and devout, and laborious and self-denying, find themselves straitened in their minds in respect to this question, and are turning anxiously every whither to see whence relief may come to them. There has been a profound change in the sentiment of Christendom in regard to those gross representations of future punishment, which were handed down to us from the past.

The reasons are not far to find. The mediæval literalization of the Bible figures, and the carrying of them forward with collateral and original illustrations of the same kind, had nearly reduced the truth of the future not only to a sensuous, but to a brutal and infernal condition. The representations that were accustomed to be made several hundred years ago, and that in the Roman Church are still made, and occasionally in Protestant Churches, were such that it seems to me no man could maintain self-respect, or, if he did, that no man could maintain his reason, and really believe them, or consciously use them. They are simply calculated to inspire horror and disgust.

The monkish descriptions of hell may be well learned from Christian art. For there have been periods of history when we could have learned theological ideas better from religious art than from books. If you will take Michael Angelo's picture of the *Last Judgment*, you will

better understand what was the real feeling of the age in which he lived on the subject of reward and punishment, than by reading any amount of theological treatises. Let any one look at that; let any one see the enormous, gigantic coils of fiends and men; let any one look at that defiant Christ that stands like a superb athlete at the front, hurling his enemies from him, and calling his friends toward him, as Hercules might have done; let any one look upon that hideous, wriggling mass that goes plunging down through the air—serpents and men and beasts of every nauseous kind, mixed together; let him look at the lower parts of the picture, where with pitchforks men are by devils being cast into caldrons and into burning fires, where hateful fiends are gnawing the sculls of suffering sinners, and where there is hellish cannibalism going on—let a man look at that picture, and the scenes which it depicts, and he sees what were the ideas which men once had of hell and of divine justice. It was a nightmare as hideous as ever was begotten by the hellish brood itself; and it was an atrocious slander on God. It was an outrage against the government of God in the universe. It was an outrage on every man's susceptibilities that had not been poisoned already by the atmosphere in which it was generated.

If you suppose that this habit of brutal representation of the material sufferings of the other life is dead, then look at the representation of the *Last Judgment* by Cornelius, a Roman Catholic artist of the German modern school. It is only necessary to say that, having lived in a later and more enlightened age, he has succeeded in making a picture more hideous than that of Michael Angelo. As a study of anatomy, as a mere piece of poetry, the sufferings which Michael Angelo depicts, may display the skill of the painter, and may have an interest to those men who love tragic things; but as representations, Dante's Inferno, Michael Angelo's picture, and the staple representations that are yet made in the Roman Church, are as outrageous as it is possible for the inflamed imagination to produce. I do not wonder that men have reacted from these horrors—I honor them for it.

Again, the impossibility of reconciling, under a just government, a terrific penalty with a universal neglect of mankind, has been, in the way in which many persons are constituted, the origin of their doubts.

I am not now stating my own opinions. I am simply giving the different views which men hold at present, or have held, on this subject.

To believe the stream of human existence to be fed and renewed in every generation, which is pouring over the precipice at the rate of thirty millions a year, into such torments as the old method of representation presented to us, and at the same time to teach that God is a loving Father—these two things have seemed so difficult to

multitudes of persons, that they have fled from the attempt to reconcile them, and have abandoned all belief in them.

Moreover, Christianity has educated a moral disposition before which the various theories of theology that have sprung into existence within the last two thousand years are now on trial again. And the theologies which could stand the moral tests of the ages in which they were bred, cannot many of them stand the test of the higher developments which have taken place in our age.

For example, vindictive justice was once thought to be perfectly right; but it cannot be defended in the great court of love. Penal suffering, disciplinary and educatory, can; but not vindictive justice. The Fatherhood of God is taking the place of Oriental monarchy. Once it was held that God might do just what He pleased, because He pleased. Now we are taught that God may do what He pleases, because love always pleases to do the best of things. God's moral government is less and less likened to despotic government, and more and more to household government; and it will continue to grow in that direction, with the growth of civilization, based on Christian instruction. The question that arises is not, "What may a supreme monarch do with his subjects?" but, "What must a Father do with His erring children?" And this gives pause to many a man.

Moreover, there has come into existence a new sentiment in respect to the rights of individuals. When kings were *jure divino* owners of all their subjects and their subjects' property, when in them was supposed to reside supreme wisdom and supreme right, then men had no rights that they could urge before the throne; and out of that state of feeling came the interpretation and misinterpretation of the monarchic figures of the Bible. For, when the Bible represents God as a monarch, and the divine government as a monarchy, it never is with a *political meaning*. It is always for an æsthetic purpose. It is, by speaking of the King, to raise in the mind of those to whom one speaks, the idea of grandeur, of beauty, of glory; and it never conceived of that question which rises in our minds when the word *king* is spoken. And so of the whole apparatus monarchical. It was employed according to the law of symbolism, or of emblems, to raise up in the mind a conception of beauty, or joy, or power; but was never intended to determine the question of right or wrong, as between aristocracy and democracy, or between democracy and monarchy.

Now, Christianity itself has developed a democracy that teaches us that man has by the very law of his being personal rights that must be respected. Before he was created he had none; but the very act of creation endowed him with rights; and God crowned him with them. The old mode of representing man as nothing, absolutely nothing,

without a word to say, can never again have the same force or growth that it had before Christianity inspired so much higher an estimate of man and of society.

The *eternity* of punishment, when anything like a conception of its signification and meaning seizes the minds of men, seems to paralyze many persons with grief. The eternity of future punishment is the point where almost all agonizing doubts and struggles of Christian theologians have arisen. And of what are called the *insoluble mysteries of divine government*, it seems to me that if the doctrine of eternity of punishment were removed, nine out of ten would disappear of themselves. For I believe that they result simply from that one term, *suffering eternity*.

All these reasons, and some others which I cannot pause to enumerate, have conspired to work the change which I say has taken place, and is taking place, on this subject.

3. We must not think that efforts to escape these views of the eternal punishment of the wicked are wanton, or that they indicate a low moral tendency. On the contrary, they are, in many instances, the result of the very highest moral susceptibility. Nor must we suppose that they spring up only in ignorant minds. They arise in the most cultivated minds that there are in the church to-day. Nor are we to believe that they are plead for the sake of getting larger license among self indulgent and wicked men; for they are plead by men who are models of Christian self-denial and heroism.

It is therefore a matter that demands still further looking into. To what grounds have these pressures brought men, and what are the theories that prevail on this subject to-day?

First is the Sadducean. It is disbelief in any immortality. According to that doctrine, there is no resurrection. This disposes of the question, of course, by one single stroke; and I need not pause to speak of that.

Next, there are those who rid themselves of the unquestionable Scripture truth of the punishment of the wicked, by denying the inspiration of the Bible, and by denying the authority of its teaching on this point. It is somewhat remarkable that what are called the most liberal interpreters of the text, generally concede that a fair construction of the Gospels must result in the teaching of the future punishment of the wicked.

Theodore Parker himself declared, I think—I may be mistaken; but if I recollect right he declared—that the first three gospels left no doubt in his mind that Christ did preach the doctrine of future and eternal punishment; but he considered Christ to be a fallible man, mistaken, having the prejudices of his age, and that his teaching on

this point was not to be accepted or believed. He rid himself of this doctrine, as thousands do, by denying the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. And it is the progress in this direction which is so much feared by good men. When a man has given up this one fact of inspiration, he has given up the whole foundation of revealed religion, and has gone upon the ground of mere natural religion. But, natural religion is an indefinite term. If it includes the moral truths which have been unfolded through the experience of mankind, then it differs but little from revealed religion. If it looks only to physical nature, then it becomes too meagre for life, and dies of inanition or runs headlong into pantheism or atheism.

A third class have taken the ground of what I may call—and I say it not reproachfully, but simply as a name—*old-fashioned Universalism.* This teaches that men suffer in this life for their sins, and are rewarded for their virtues, and that the power of God at death sets men free from whatever remains of sin and impurity there may be, and inspires them with a sovereign spiritual power to go forward hereafter in the true life. This I understand to be the philosophical statement of the old ground of universalism. But these views are not at present in the ascendent, even in what we call Universalist Churches. The dominant tendency now is to admit future punishment as a truth taught, and a tenet to be accepted, but to teach that it is remedial and educatory, and that it will finally bring men to holiness through suffering. This is called sometimes the *Restorationist* view.

Not a little progress has been made, however, in a still different direction from this—in a very widely different view. There are those who seek to escape from the doctrine of future punishment by teaching that immortality is not natural; that it does not belong to all; that it was not born with men; that it is a special gift to those only who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; and that all others perish. And by *perish* they mean, literally, *are annihilated.* Some say that they are peremptorily annihilated at death; and other some, that they are consumed after a longer or shorter period of penal suffering. But both agree that annihilation is the portion of wicked men, and that immortality belongs only, and as a special gift, to those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. And so this class of men escape from believing the dreadful doctrine of future punishment.

There are those who teach that there is a series of spheres, or planes, and that men go forth from this life to that sphere or plane for which their particular development here fits them, and that they progress, in ascending order, under the nutriment of spiritual culture, until all, at

last, will reach their ultimate perfection. This may be called a cross between Swedenborgianism and modern "spiritualism."

Then, a few there are who, having felt the pressure of the great difficulties which are involved, have fallen upon this same doctrine of spheres, or successive opportunities, in an inverse order; but they have sought to escape by teaching a doctrine of *previous existence*. They hold that men are now living a second time; that they have already lived and fallen; and that God has now, and in this world, given them one more chance to recover from their fall in the foregoing existences. This is only a variation of the last doctrine of spheres. One places the renewed chance here, and the other places it hereafter. Both hold to a series of chances or spheres of existence; only one says that this life exhausts the series, and the other says that this life only begins the series. It is the same theory; only you take it at different ends.

Others have thought that while the system of reward and punishment was eternal, each individual under that system did not suffer eternally; that the great moral constitution by which right and wrong were distinguished, and pleasure or pain attached to them respectively, was not peculiar to this life, but that it belonged to the eternal life and the order of things forever. They hold that the great *law* by which sin suffers and righteousness rejoices, *is eternal;* but that men do not individually go into eternal suffering because the system of penalties is eternal.

Without my expressing an opinion with regard to any of these systems, further than I have in explanation of them, you will be struck in view of them, with two things: first with the anguish of heart which has led men to seek some relief from the popular representations of eternal punishment. We cannot meet this anguish of men's hearts on cold exegetical grounds. We may not believe with them, but we cannot denounce them. We may think that they have taken an evasive line of reasoning, or that they have gone off on a fancy, rather than a true line of fact; or we may say that it is contrary to the testimony of Scripture; but when great natures, in the anguish of their souls, and with their sympathies enkindled for their fellow-men, have taken one or the other of these grounds, they are to be respected, and not persecuted. The time is coming when men will demand the right to think, to open again these questions of destiny, and to bring to bear upon them all that added light which the later ages of Christianity, and a higher inspiration of the Holy Ghost, will enable them to concentrate. I do not say that they are right or wrong; but this I declare, that if there is any one point on which we are to be tolerant and charitable and forbearing in our constructions of men's beliefs, it is on this. For there is not a place where the thought can dwell that is

so terrific, and where the heart suffers so profoundly as on this very point.

Contrast these various theories, however, with the sublime simplicity of Christ's teaching, and you will be struck with the difference between inspired teaching and human philosophizing—for I now state affirmatively what I understand to be the Scripture doctrine and representation. The whole doctrine substantially rests upon Christ's sole teaching. If we had only the Old Testament we could but guess that there was an existence after death, of any kind. The full disclosure belongs to the New Testament; and in the New Testament, while there are, especially now in the light of the Gospels, passages in which the Apostles teach the truth of dreadful coming punishment, yet the foundation, the main ground and confidence and support of this truth is that our Master taught it. The loving, the gentle, the sympathetic, the sacrificial Saviour, who loved sinning men so that he came to die for them—he, calmly, deliberately, over and over again, did teach his disciples in such a way that they at that time, and since then the great body of the church, have believed that he meant us to understand that there is a future state of punishment, and that it is so great and dreadful a thing that all men should with terrible earnestness flee from it.

He announced the fact. He did not reason upon it, nor point out its place in a system of moral truth, nor give it philosophical definition, nor consider objections to it, nor attempt to reconcile it with any theory of divine love or divine power. He raised His hand to the sky to draw aside the curtain, and there, right before his hearers, rose the dark grandeur of future Retribution. He bore witness to it as a fact. He did not discourse upon it as a philosophy. From the beginning of his ministry to the end, he went about saying, "Repent! repent!" And the universal sinfulness of man, while it never had so much sympathy, at the same time never had such fidelity of rebuke as in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. He did not teach that the danger of men's sinfulness is in this life; but, while doubtless recognizing all the incidental penalties that belong to evil-doing under material law, he all the time kept open before the eye the great horizon of the future. There is not one thing more characteristic of Christ's teaching than that constant largeness of sphere in his thought—that looking to the great *Beyond*. It was the cope of the eternal world under which he seemed to be standing. And one reason of the dignity and authority and power with which he taught, and the grasp that he laid on men's consciousness, as well as on their reason and their sensibilities, was that he spoke as One that came down from heaven; and his teachings on the subject of penalty, therefore, were not teachings of the facts

of natural law in this world, but were teachings in respect to the everlasting constitution of God, from eternity to eternity. He taught that it was a danger that men had in the future so great as to demand from every man the putting forth of his whole strength.

He did not teach that symbols are literal and not figures, that hell is a literal kingdom, nor that there is a literal fire there, nor that they who are gathered there are literally tormented as men in dungeons and inquisitorial monarchical prisons were; but this he certainly did mean, and this men understood that he meant—that their sins will bring down upon them penalties here, and penalties hereafter, and that the danger is neither light nor transient. It is vast, it is voluminous; and he measured it by the effort that is required to overcome it. And that was indicated by his words, "Strive (that is, *agonize*) to enter in at the straight gate. Many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." It was declared that the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent storm it—that is the figure. Men are in such peril of losing heaven, and of falling into wreck and ruin, that they must put forth their utmost exertion. That which a beleaguering army does, do ye and get the gate open; and then charge through and take possession of the fort. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." It is a real danger. It is an awful danger. It is calculated to stir up fear, quicken imagination, acuminate susceptibility, and to put men everywhere on the alert. This feeling ran all through Christ's ministry.

The danger also is so great that it was the occasion of His coming from heaven. Not less than equal with the Father, He laid aside the glory which He had, that He might rescue the world from death. His advent, His life, His teachings, His sacrifice and His death, He connected, all of them, with the peril that betided men; and the whole example of Christ was a silent testimony to the reality of that fear which brooded like dark thunderclouds over the whole wide horizon of the future.

This was the undertone which ran through the whole of Christ's teaching, both public and private. He inculcated morality and manhood; but there was something beyond this. There was an invisible world. There were inexpressible perils. He, and after Him His apostles, labored as they that would snatch men as brands from the burning.

Now, I have felt every difficulty that any man has ever felt. In my thought I walk around about the terrific fact of the future. I, too, take into account the Fatherhood of God, and I look upon the unpitied nations of the globe; and with inexpressible longing and anguish, for which there is no word, I have sought relief. But there is the

plain, simple testimony of Jesus Christ. I cannot get around that, nor get over it. There it is. I have nothing to say. I cannot fathom the matter. A child can ask me questions that I cannot answer. I find my soul aching. As it were drops of blood flow for tears. But, after all, I do believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. And I do not believe He would deceive me nor deceive you. And if you ask me for the reason of the faith that is in me, I simply say this, "Jesus says so"—that is all. And I cannot give up His testimony. I preach the love of God, and I do not know what the scope of that love is. I do not know where it would logically lead. But I am sure that I am right in preaching that all punitive elements are under the control of love. I am perfectly sure that love will bring everything right in the end. I therefore preach without qualification, and almost without limitation on that side. But I am not to be understood, on that account, as not believing what Christ Himself deliberately says in respect to the peril of sin, or in regard to punishment in the life which is to come. When I doubt the doctrine, therefore, it will be because I doubt the divinity of Christ. As long as I hold to the divinity of Christ, I cannot but hold the truth which He taught me to believe and to teach to others—that sin will be visited in the other life with terrible penalties, such as no man's imagination can pierce. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

It goes to my heart to say these things. This is not the side that I seem to myself called to preach. Yet it is there, and if I am faithful to my whole duty I must preach it. As a surgeon does things that are most uncongenial to himself, so sometimes I do. And I do this with tears and with sorrow. It makes me sick.

I remark, in review, then, that while we are to be utterly tolerant of those who have adopted other theories; while we are neither to disown them as Christians, nor to discipline them, for believing as they do—the day has gone by when a man is to be disciplined for his honest belief; if men cannot be cured in the open court of reasoning, they cannot be cured at all, and we are not their masters to punish them—while we are to acknowledge every man's right in this respect, and treat with kindness and fair-mindedness those that take grounds different from our own, yet let me say that any theory which takes off the pressure of responsibility that rests upon every man, that removes from any man's conscience the burden that Christianity puts there, or lessens his feeling of the awfulness of sin, is unchristlike and dangerous. Christ placed the burden of fear on unrepentant men's consciences; and any one who takes off that burden of fear is not Christ-like.

I say, once more, that any theory is permissible that still puts before a man all the motives and spurs of hope and of fear as they are

combined in the truth of heaven and hell; and that any modifications of views hitherto held are permissible if they do not break the force of responsibility. If you break that, you break the great element of moral government. The sense of obligation to right, and the fear of doing wrong, should be maintained. Variations in philosophy may be permissible, but we must have the substance of Christ's teaching, which is, that it is damnable to sin, that it is dangerous to die in sin, and that the future is full of peril to wicked men; while the life to come is full of blessedness to the righteous.

This leads me, lastly, to speak of the uses which we are to make of this truth. It seems to me that instead of dividing ourselves up into pugnacious sects, instead of separating ourselves into contending schools, on this matter, we should constantly have before our minds these most solemn testimonies of Christ in his teaching throughout the Gospel, and that they should keep alive and sharp in every one of us the reality of right and wrong. We ought not to allow the distinction between good and evil to be fused, run together, or to be slurred over. All the world is filled with illusions; and there is nothing that men are in more danger of losing than clear, sharp notions of honor, and truth, and rectitude, and responsibility. And this teaching of Christ brings the whole pressure of the eternal world to bear on the conscience in such a way as to keep it alert, sensitive, and true. It should keep alive in us a sense of our own eternal being. We never live only for the day; and yet we do live by the day. But, in the sense of formative power, the feelings that throb and swell in you to-day are master-masons, and with their little trowels they are building, building, building, in your thoughts and impulses; and they never leave you as they found you. You are changing from hour to hour; and that which is building is building for eternity. For our life does not consist in the days that we are spending on earth. Our life runs forward endlessly. And though we do not see what is being done within, the work goes on without cessation.

The man who sits at the end of the magnetic line works at his little telegraphic machine, but sees no writing. The message is rendered a hundred miles away. We are living here, and all our acts are performed here; but the record and the portraiture, the character and the destiny report themselves far beyond.

This doctrine of the Future makes life most solemn, and brings motives for fidelity and for activity which we cannot gather within the horizon of time. It ought to inspire earnestness and watchfulness and great endurance and great industry, in those who are seeking to save themselves.

We are many of us as men who have been cast away upon the sea,

and are upon rafts, trying to reach the shore. We are as men that are sick, and are, by watchfulness, and by care, and by skill, striving to regain their health. We should live, not as men who are well, but as men that need a physician.

We ought especially to be incited to fidelity to our children. By as much as you fear and dread this great truth of the punishment of sin hereafter, by so much you must be faithful to your children from the cradle upward, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is not safe for them to sin. It is not safe for them to be selfish. It is not safe for them to be proud. It is not safe for them to be sensuously prosperous, sacrificing every virtue that they may be prosperous in this world. You are bringing them up for the kingdom of God. Woe be to that mother and to that father who stand in the judgment day at last, and hear their child say, "But for you I had not perished!"

No man can enter into the kingdom of God without strife. No virtue can be wrought out without strife. Our virtues are like crystals hidden in rocks. No man shall find them by any soft ways, but by the hammer and by fire. If there is anything that is to endure the fear of death, and the strifes of the eternal world, it is that to which we come by suffering. And we are to account nothing too heavy, nothing too sharp, nothing too long, in this life that shall bring us, at last, crowned and robed and sceptered, into the presence of our own God to be participators of his immortality.

Men and brethren, we are standing on the verge of the unseen world. All the thunderous din of this life ought not to fill our ears so but that we can hear the Spirit and the Bride that say to every man, through this golden air to-day, "Come! come!" And that lonely and solemn sound, like that of the surf beating on the shore from the broad Atlantic, that all day and all night sounds on, and is never still—that sound comes from the other world, and says to us, "Beware, beware of that punishment of sin which overhangs the other and the under life forever and forever!"

May God bring us through brightness to gladness, and through gladness to joy, and through joy to immortality of blessedness. Amen.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

O God, before thee can all flesh come, with all their wants, to ask supply; with all their infirmities, to receive strength; and before thee shall all come to render their dread account, when thou shalt judge the quick and the dead. And we, too, shall come; and secret things shall be made known, and hidden things plain, before God; and we shall receive according to the deeds done in the body. We desire to live looking forward to that adjudication; to the equity of God. We desire to remember that thy love is full of justice, and that love itself must be just. We desire to believe in thee as paternal, and as administering in heaven by love, and upon earth; and yet that it is not the nature or possibility of love to bear and clear the guilty; and that thou dost love purity, and that those whom thou lovest must be pure, and true, and good. And though it is hard for us to rise into the possession of holiness, it is not hard for those to be holy in whom thy spirit works, both to will and to do of the good pleasure of God. Thou art not standing aloof to command. Thou art in every one of us, working in us, inspiring us, brooding over us, speaking by the world outside, speaking by thy providence, speaking by the Holy Ghost, in tones that the heart knows, though the ear may not hear. And thou dost love us, and art our faithful Friend, our Teacher, our Guide. Unless our pride is obdurate, and our hearts are as stone, thou wilt surely win us from all sin, and thou wilt prepare us for thine own dear kingdom of peace and joy, conveying us through the darkness and through the unknown portal of death, and through the airy way, home, with joy, unto our Father's house.

And now we desire, O Lord our God, to renew our thanks for the revelation of this knowledge. By thy truth thou hast cleansed the heaven of our fears, that went vagrant every whither to search for spirits and demons and all sprites of mischief and of evil. There are none, or they are beneath thy government; and thou dost control them. Thou hast delivered us from the fear of all those unknown causes that terrified the ignorant in days gone by. For the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. All laws, and all processes—the mightiest, are still beneath thy sway. Thou sayest, Go; and they go. Thou sayest, Stay; and they obey thy bidding.

Now we desire, Lord, since thou art for us, to fear none who shall be against us— to walk in the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom, and the love of God, which is the end thereof. And we pray that thou wilt vouchsafe to us, every day the sense of thy presence. Give us the monition of thy Spirit. Give us the secret communion of thy heart, that hidden love, which is incommunicable, and yet blessed in so many. Grant unto us, we pray thee, that peace which passeth all understanding—that peace in which fear cannot live—that peace which is the cure of care—that peace which takes from love its anxiety, and from bereavement its anguish, and from desolateness all its loneliness. Grant that each one may have resting upon him that peace which shall be as the sunlight over all the earth, bringing beauty, bringing life, and bringing gladness.

We pray that thou wilt fulfill all thy promises to thy people. Teach them more and more to trust God, and to walk by faith, and not by sight. Teach us while we are enjoying the abundance of thy providence, and are in a large place, and are prospered, not to become selfish and to lose sympathy for others. May we remember Him who, though rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich. Grant that we may have his spirit in us.

And we pray that thou wilt bless us in our households, and sanctify our intercourse one with another, and exalt our affections. Grant that our daily life may savor of heaven, and that the perfumes of the Celestial Garden may be upon our raiment, as upon those who have walked therein.

O Lord, bless to-day those who have gathered together in thy presence in this sanctuary,—those who are unknown to us, but known to

thee—strangers among strangers. If their hearts are with thine, they are with ours. They are our brethren. May they feel it. May they rejoice in the service of the sanctuary, and take home the truth as God's message—their God's, and our God's. And we pray that this sacred bond of union in Jesus Christ may interpret man to man, all the world over. We pray that thou wilt bless all those in thy presence who need thee to quicken them against temptation; to give them songs in the night; to give them light in darkness. May there be those in thy presence who now shall discharge trouble, and cast their care upon the Lord, and witness to the faithfulness with which his promises are kept to them.

Grant, we pray thee, that those who are dull of heart may be stirred up to-day. May we all take lessons of instruction out of thy Word. And we pray that it may breathe more earnestness upon our lives, and moral solemnity upon our sense of duty. And may we do with our might what our hands find to do; knowing that the night cometh when no man can work.

And grant thy blessing to rest upon all the churches that are open to-day, and upon thy dear servants that preach the Gospel. Preach to them, that they may preach to the people. Spread abroad the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, in every part of our land. Turn back infidelity, and all immorality, and Sabbath-breaking, and profanity, and avarice, and greediness, and violence, and misrule, and corruption of every name.

Sanctify this great nation, and make it a people of God. We pray for the nations of the earth—for those that are in darkness, that the light promised may arise speedily upon them. We pray for those that are struggling in the midst of ignorance and superstition, among whom burn the taper lights of the Gospel. Oh! kindle them more and more until they shall glow like the morning upon the mountains.

We pray for those nations that are engaged in war. Will the Lord speedily make known his own counsel, and fulfill that which he hath purposed of mercy—for we believe thou art ploughing that thou mayest sow. And though there is blood in the furrow, there shall yet be peace; and over all the distracted land there shall be yet better law, better knowledge, better men. But may nations learn peace through love and through justice.

And we pray that intelligence may make the common people wise, that they may not be led hither and thither as sheep to the slaughter. We pray that truth may prevail, and that all the nations of the earth may learn that they are men, not beasts. May the Spirit of the Lord go forth; and may that kindling light, which so long hath shone dimly in prophecy, burst forth. And little by little may the morning gather and pour abroad over all the earth, until the welcome shout from above shall tell us that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly; for the whole earth doth wait for thee, and long, and groan, and travail in pain.

And the glory shall be to the Father, and the Son and the Spirit. *Amen.*

THE MINISTRATION OF PAIN.

"For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."—ROM. viii., 18.

The Hebrew was not, according to our modern interpretation of that term, of a philosophical nature. The Greek generated ideas in the intellect; and they pertained mostly to beauty and to the imagination. The Hebrew, deep in nature, gave forth his ideas from his heart. They were therefore more moods of fervent emotion. The expression of his philosophy was not the expression of a train of intellectual thought. It was, rather, some form of experience set forth. The Apostle Paul, more than any other one of the writers of the Bible, united these two elements—the logical, intellectual power of the Greek mind, and the profound, emotive nature of the Hebrew mind.

Therefore you shall find (and this is the peculiar difficulty in the interpretation of the Apostle Paul's writings) that while he maintains a certain exterior form of argument, or philosophical statement, it is, as it were, exploded here and there continually by the unbidden and tumultuous outpourings of his heart. And no man can interpret correctly who cannot bring himself into sympathy both with the inspiration which comes from deep inward moral life, and with philosophical forms and processes.

Now, the eighth Chapter of Romans, it seems to me, is the greatest feat of moral philosophy that has ever been performed in this world. It is deeper, more comprehensive, and therefore more difficult in the form in which it stands, than any other part of Scripture. It may be called *an epitome of Paul's philosophy of the universe.* Almost every moral question ever agitated finds some recognition here. Its very difficulties arise from the number and importance of the truths which pour into it; for, like the Amazon, it drains a continent; and every drop that falls upon the furthest mountain, or along the valleys, finds its way hither. And so, I might almost say that the Bible forms a water-shed on either side, and that it all runs into the eighth Chapter of Romans, for depth, and width, and momentum, and for the endlessness of the ocean into which it flows.

SUNDAY MORNING. Oct. 23, 1870. LESSON: ROMANS VIII., 18–39. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 199, 905, 1257.

I have selected from this chapter Paul's doctrine of suffering as the subject of remark this morning. From the first verse to the seventeenth of this chapter, Paul illustrates the conflict that is going on between the faculties which represent man's physical condition, and the nobler faculties which have been developed above them. It is the great battle of the spirit against the flesh, which has been going on since the beginning of time. And the pointings of recent science, instead of sweeping anything away, are going to corroborate in an extraordinary manner that very line of truth and of argument which the Apostle instituted, from the first verse to the seventeenth—although he had not any foresight of it in its scientific developments as we have in our day. There is a strife between that which a man has by virtue of his animal constitution—his animal appetites and passions—and that which he has by virtue of his higher nature, by which he becomes a son of God. These two things, associated—these two conditions, one working outwardly and downward, and the other inwardly and upward through the invisible; one taking cognizance of visible objects, and the other of interior truths—have been for ages in mighty conflict. The flesh has striven against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. Each of them has been seeking to come into the ascendancy.

In the seventeeth and eighteenth verses, he sets forth the ultimate result of this conflict on the scale of the whole world, and all time.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God [that is, individuals are, and the race are.]"

It is not a bestial race because it has so much in common with beasts. It is not a physical and animal race because it has so many alliances with the animal condition, and has had so much experience and contact with it. There is yet, in this great, hard, coarse, animalized, sensuous, ignominious human family, a daring spirit. They are, notwithstanding their lower nature, sons of God. The spiritual element is in them.

"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

Have you never noticed how Beethoven *thinks* in his symphonies; how, the grand movement sweeping on as if it were the sound of winds and birds in some mighty forest, there will suddenly, as it were far away, remotely, come in one single, simple, wailing note, while everything is going on? And then before you know it, he has modulated the whole symphony, and it follows that one note, and conforms to it, and develops the new theme, opening up in another sphere with a majesty and grandeur incomparable. And so, here, that word *suffer* is the note that is struck in the course of argument. And now Paul turns and runs out after that, and opens it up, and unfolds it, in a most wonderful manner. He has been saying, "Here is the animal life, but

there is a spiritual one; and the spiritual life is working against it, and striving to get the uppermost. And the created world is a witness that we are the children of God. And there is the testimony of the spirit that we are Christ's if we suffer with him." Ah! how significant that word *suffer*. Then he says,

"For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

We are the children of God. Our future is incomparable glory. And the instrument by which we are going to be brought to it is suffering. That was the thought which lay in his mind.

Then he sketches the relation of this experience of suffering to the divine idea in creation, and brings out, first, that suffering inheres in the nature of that plan which God developes in the life of this globe, where he says,

"The earnest expectation of the creature [it would be better translated, the earnest expectation of *creation*] waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."

The whole world is aspiring to that unknown sonship, that spiritual divinity, in every man. The whole creation is pointing toward it in certain ways, and longing for it. For, "the creature," Paul says, "was made subject to vanity"—that is to say, to weakness, to aberration, to sin. Everything that comes short of the ideal creation was made subject to this, "not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope." This suffering, and collision, and attrition, and all the phenomena which fall out under it, are a part of God's design, the apostle declares. They are not accidents. They are not interpolations. They are not discords, thrown in without the musician's knowing it. They are not blots on the manuscript, that have to be written over, or under, or scratched out. They are a part of the organic design of God in the creation of the world. When, far back in the eternal ages, He made the globe, He did not mean to make it a round, golden, bright globe, full of ethereal and perfected spirits. He meant to make it just as He did make it—a globe that should begin with nothing, and unfold, and unfold, with mighty stripes, and with mighty sufferings, and with mighty victories ultimately, and with perfect glory and joy in the end. And thus, suffering creation "was made subject to vanity, not willingly," not of its own accord, not of its own volition, but by the fore-ordination of God. By the divine decree it was made just as it was made. So the apostle declares.

"Because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

This world has not seen its history. You must not judge of what is to take place in the long run by the opening of the battle which we

have but just seen—for the ages have only opened it. In the end there will be a triumphant consummation. So says the apostle.

"For we know [and here comes in a kind of sad, minor strain following that twenty-first verse of jubilation] that the whole creation groaneth, and travaileth in pain together until now."

This is only a latent use of the thought which Christ expressed in the sixteenth chapter of John's Gospel, and the twenty-first verse:

"A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world."

The first clasp of the babe in her bosom pays her for every groan and for every anguish. *The whole creation groans and travails in pain.* It is bringing forth. But when it shall have brought forth, it will not be a man-child merely—it will be *the man-child Jesus Christ.* It is God manifest in man that shall be the ultimation. We are born in a period which shows the labor-pain. It is the throe of coming spiritual birth that agitates the globe and the race of men. This is the apostolic thought, evidently.

He also shows that it will not end in confusion. It is not disorderly because it is dark. The pain-bearing world has a glorious future. The suffering of God's people will by and by glow in heaven with a light compared with which all we know of glory on earth will seem insignificant.

After the storm has brooded all day long, and hung low, so that the clouds shut out all forms, and there was but gray and haze, have you never seen the wind shift and roll away the clouds, and the clouds bank themselves up and sweep out, so that at last the sun, toward sunset, struck them at the proper angle, and all that had been so dark and gloomy through the day began to light itself up, and stood like a heavenly portal glowing wide, and the glories began to flash out on those banks that now had lifted themselves up into the very brightness of heaven? And yet it was the same thing that at one time made the darkness, and that at another time seemed to be the glory of heaven itself.

The sorrows and trials and mischiefs of this world are dark enough in the passing, and in the brooding; but the time is coming when the light of God's countenance shall be so let in upon them that they shall be marvels and magnitudes of glory and of beauty.

And then comes that anthem which it seems to me might well be chanted in every Christian church at least once on every Sabbath. After the Apostle has gone through, in his peculiar way, half feeling, half reasoning, much being sketched and hinted, and, indeed, leaving vast unexplored depths, then, as it were, when the mind has traveled over, and got on the other side of the question, he breaks out and says,

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

He has been speaking about the history of this world; about the strife between the good and the bad, between truth and falsehood, between the higher elements and the lower. He has been saying that this is a part of the constitution of things. He has been saying that the ages are waiting for the development of the meaning of it. He has been saying that the complete disclosure shall by and by come; and that then the glory revealed shall be such that all the sufferings which we have been called to endure shall not be worthy of mention in comparison with it. He has been saying that there shall be no forces, no fate, no intervention, nothing, that shall stand between God and the consummation of these things. He has been saying that God, having declared it, shall fulfill it. And then, when he has finished that long testimony and argument, he says,

"Who [with all this before our minds—for that is the force of it] shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that, neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor anything in creation, [for that is the meaning of the phrase *nor any other creature*,] shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

I propose to translate some few of these thoughts into forms and language which will fit our experience, and into the expression of the philosophy of our time.

Pain is but an inflection of sensibility. Sensibility is the evidence of the existence of nerve; and nerve-life is the distinguishing difference between the vegetable and the animal. As you go down and nerve decreases, so its capacity, and so its quantity of existence, decreases. Or, taking the reverse, as you go up from the very lowest development of life, you will find that you come to a new development of that existence which we call *nerve*, but which is the ground and root of sensibility, whether of pleasure or of pain. Pleasure and pain are the two factors of sensation; and they grow first to consciousness; then to volition; then to character; and so to final ripeness.

Pain is not, then, a discord, nor an accident. It is a part of the original constitution of things. If you imagine a being, as the world has been made, that has no pain, you imagine a being that has no existence as a sentient or possibly intelligent creature. Why this is so; why God should have chosen to create the world as he has created it, no man can ask. The only true philosophical question is, How has God made the world? It is not philosophical to ask, *Why* did he make

it so? for there is the point where by searching no man can find out God. But Paul declares that this condition of things whereby pain came into the world, was not from the willingness of the creature——not from the volition of the man. This was instrumental; that is, it was concerned in it. But the power of susceptibility, which is, in other words, the organization of the nervous system—that brought it in. The less pain, the less life-capacity. The less pain-power, the less life-power.

If you go to the lower orders, you shall find that they suffer very little. But then they live very little. If you go down to the ox, the ox does not suffer as a man does. He has no anxiety, except the most transient fear, on occasion: he never meditates fear. The ox has no exquisite suffering. If he fails of food he suffers a little hunger; but his range of suffering is very small. And his range of enjoyment is very small, too. If you go below him, you will come to a plane where there is still less suffering, until you reach the point where life can be divided up, and where if you cut a worm to pieces, each section makes off with itself, and furnishes itself with new legs, and new feeders, and a new stomach, and everything that it needs, and goes on again with a separate existence just as well as if it had not been touched.

If you go down below that to the still lower forms—to the jelly-fish, and such like—they seem to be mere pulpy masses, almost without any sensibility or susceptibility of suffering. As you go down, pain grows less and less; and so does life-force, and so does capacity, showing that pain is not accidental—that it has something to do with that organization by which come growth, complexity, dignity, magnitude, and divinity. And we shall see, probably more clearly, what it is.

The progress of life upwards, then, is marked by capacity of suffering; that is, by susceptibility; by the number of faculties which begin to act in conjunction or coördination; by the variety of the relations to the outward world and to each other which so many faculties place us in.

Pain and suffering are, in the actual experience of this world, regulative, disciplinary, and formative. They are not accidental. They are not without a tendency. They tend to regulate and rule men. They tend to discipline and instruct men. They tend to mould and confirm men in higher manhood. And suffering and joy, working together, are God's two schoolmasters, as it were. Suffering is the man, and joy is the woman—the husband and the wife. One is schoolmaster in one way, and the other in a corresponding and coöperative way. They regulate, they discipline and they fashion men. These are the great factors which inhere in nature, and by which the scheme of God in the universe is being unfolded and carried on to its final consummation and triumph.

Now let us specify under this general statement.

1. *Bodily pain* is the lowest form of suffering. It is of the least direct moral value. Yet it is indispensable. Where men are seeking to extend their range of existence, but are ignorant, it must needs be, if pain be regulative and disciplinary and formative, that in the process of learning how to carry even the body, pain will be present as well as pleasure, and both the one and the other will take man in charge. Animals know but very little. They are not susceptible of education except in the very smallest degree. But men develop; and pain with them occupies a much larger space. It mingles far more with their experience. But as they develop in the first instance, in civilized nations, and indeed in childhood, so far as the individuals themselves are concerned, they are ignorant of the conditions of the laws which surround them. Pain begins its office-work from the very earliest period; and it is the concommitant of the tendency to enlarge one's being. Suffering is that which comes by the attempt to live more, larger, more variously, more gloriously; but as we do not know how to do it beforehand, we have to find our way; and finding our way, we strike against this law and that law, against this decree and that decree, some of which respond in music, some in discord, some in pleasure, and some in pain. But we gather from both sides; for we are learning, practicing, finding our way up gradually, through the ministration of suffering and pleasure.

Suffering is derived from the *lower forms of mind.* From strivings, anxious forethought, care, the trouble of discriminating acquaintances and professions and labors, that are incident to persons who are seeking to make their way complexly for themselves and for their households in a great world like this—from these things the mind suffers. It gets tired, which is suffering.

It suffers, also, by ignorance of how to use itself, as it were tangling its faculties together. It suffers, likewise, from ignorance of the future. It suffers also by the handling of a man's self in all the relations of secular life, since he has no intuitions and no instincts such as the lower animals have. Thus is brought upon men a great amount of suffering. It is the lowest form: nevertheless, it is a *form.*

Now, this suffering is a teacher. It is a monitor. It is a companion that, going along the way, is perpetually pointing out the good and the evil, the right and the wrong. Pleasure and pain are perpetual interpretations of the law of rectitude.

2. Then comes a larger section of suffering; viz., that which arises from *disappointment of inordinate or irregular desires.* Men are only larger children. As children cry for what the parents know they must not have, and suffer because they are not allowed to suffer still more; so

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men, through their ignorance or immoderation of various kinds, are perpetually seeking for things which would be their destruction, or would lead to greater mischief than the penalties by which they are denied. There is pride of life; and men run out after the things that will gratify that pride, with an eagerness far beyond that with which they seek the things that will gratify their moral sense. Men are looking out in this life after things that they want, but that they do not need. Vanity, self-indulgence in pleasure, indolence, ease—these are things which are aimed at. In other words, men are ignorant as to how they shall build. They are determined to build the foundations of their life, and to seek their happiness, in ways which are contrary to the very end of that happiness, because contrary to the very end of their moral development and character. And this is the origin of disappointments. Two-thirds of all the disappointments of life are not sent by a special Providence. Men butt against them. They hunt them for themselves. They seek them out in their own folly. And when pride is denied, we marvel at the mystery. Pride would be emperor; it would be pope; it would be all things; it would be God in man, without the divine greatness and purity; it would be supreme in power, and insatiable in demand; but this is not according to the law of the universe. Pride, so long as there is a benevolent Providence, must not be allowed to govern; and there come disappointments. And men wonder and marvel as to what is the origin of so much suffering. It is very plain what the origin of so much suffering is. Suppose a man should take a gimlet-hole as large as his little finger, and insist on crowding his thumb into it? And suppose, as it excoriated his flesh, he should stand and say, "What is the reason that this hurts me so? It is a mystery to me that my thumb aches in the way it does?" And yet, a man takes his pride, and attempts to force it through life in such a way as to crowd it into places where it has no business to be, and out of all true relations; and then wonders why he, of all men, is singled out for so much pain and suffering!

3. So, also, our *affections grow inordinate*, and seek to clothe themselves with conditions that are not consistent with the relations which every one sustains to those about him, and to his circumstances. And no one can determine so well as God what are those relations, and what is the fulfilling of them. The perpetual attempt to use single faculties, and those not the highest, out of all proportion, and out of wise direction, and out of proper coördination, explains largely the troubles and the dissatisfactions of men in life. We do not need any prophet to interpret to us that the sufferings which they, I was going to say, "enjoy," are sufferings which are remedial, which are occasionally medicinal, and which are not to be regarded as evidence of malign fate, or of evil in

the world; but which are to be regarded as belonging to that constitution of things by which God does not mean to let men distort themselves, and stands saying to each faculty, "In your own proportion; in your own channel; in your own order." When men are not out of line, pain is not there; but when they are, pain is there. Pain is proof that a man is wrong, under such circumstances.

4. Man's *vanity* is profuse, protean, full of all illusions. "Regular, irregular, and defective," as the verbs used to be in my hapless days, is vanity, growing more and more voluminous from the beginning, and in every direction. And if there be an order in the universe, and in individual development, under which human vanity cannot be permitted to become supreme, sucking out the nutriment of every other part of the soul; and a man seeks through vanity that which he can get only through other faculties, and, failing to realize that which is sought because he seeks it in wrong ways, he marvels that he suffers, —do you marvel that he does? Ought he not to suffer? Is it not a benefit to any man who seeks to destroy his nature, that a decree of God stands and says, "Thus far, and no farther," and with buffet shoves him off from his own harm? And is it not benevolence, as well?

5. There is another class of sufferings which perhaps are harder to bear, and upon which the same remarks will cast some light. I mean the sufferings of *bereavements and of affection.* We love; and we are placed in circumstances developing great tenacity and fruitfulness of love; as, for instance, the love of parents for their children. We are cautioned against idolatry—which is a wise caution. Nevertheless, in the order of Providence and of nature, a little child, knowing nothing, is to live, as it were, off from and out of his parents; and they are obliged, so to speak, to enwrap him. They throw themselves around about him in order that he may feed out of their wisdom, tenderness, and instruction and guidance. Nor is it possible for two natures to conform themselves to the necessities of an inferior nature in this way, and do it for one, two, and many years, and, when suddenly this object of their affection is taken away from them, not feel an an' ache and a suffering for which there are no words in language—and for which no words are needed, because ten thousand hearts interpret, from what they have felt, the meaning of this suffering. And it seems strange that this should be so. There are many points of publicity in it. There is no one place where questions fly so thick, and where they are so difficult to answer, as here. If it is said, "This child died by a violation of natural law, and if you had observed natural law the child would have lived," the answer immediately is, "Then why did I not have natural law revealed to me? I

did the best I could. I rose early and sat up late. What sort of paternal love is it which could leave me in ignorance of that on which the life of my child depended? Across the way is a child that is poor and sickly and abused; and if it grows up, it will probably grow up to mischief, and live in misery all its life long. My child was healthy, it was well organized, it had hereditary tendencies of good; and I watched over it, and spent my whole honest endeavor to do well by it. And yet it was taken."

You cannot answer such questions. If you descend to human philosophy in this matter, all that you can say, is, that we are living in in this world for another, and that transplantation often takes place by the ministration of natural law, just as much as by God's right hand. It takes place according to a decree and a purpose which have not been revealed, and of which we know nothing now, though we shall understand it hereafter. No man can tell why his companion should be taken so suddenly, when there was every reason why she should remain. No man can tell why a person who is useful and apparently indispensible in the community, as a Christian, should be transplanted prematurely—that is, before the time. No one can tell why a child that is promising and virtuous, and in whom centre the hopes of the parent, should be taken before it has grown up. There is in human philosophy no answer to these questions that can satisfy the heart. The only reply that can be made to them, is, that the suffering is momentary; that the branch that is broken here will have its full growth there; that the consummation is only delayed; that children whose life is cut short in this world will have a new life under better auspices in the world to come; that what we lose on this side of the grave we shall have again when we reach the other side. There comes in a larger sense of life. There comes in a thought of expansion and opening.

There is many and many a man who never knew that there were more than twenty-five thousand miles in the universe until love sent him a mourning pilgrim seeking after the absent one. Then he learned that there was an infinity. For, when a soul stricken through and through, goes mourning, and saying, "Where is it? where is it?" and the sun says, "Not in me," and night says, "Not in me," and the grave mutely says, "Not in me," and God says, "Here," and the Spirit and the Bride say, "Come,"—oh! then the heart learns circumnavigation and largeness, and has restored to it in the long run, in the augmented sense of love, and in the power of augmented moral being, more than has been taken from it. Absence is for a day, but knowledge is for eternity.

"No chastening," says the apostle, "for the present seemeth to be

joyous, but grievous." God is not like foolish parents who take the spoon of noxious medicine, put it to the lips of the child, and say, lying, "Take it, my dear; it is sweet and good." God is like an honest parent, who says to the child, "It is very bitter, my dear; but you must take it; for it will make you feel better by-and-by." God says,

"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby [that is, who are disciplined by it]."

So it is of bereavements, and of all such sufferings.

6. Then there is a suffering that is still higher—for we have already gone very high. There is a form of suffering which arises from the conflict of good and evil in ourselves, or the harmonization of a man's mind or soul by giving the control of it to his higher nature. This is what is called *self-government.* It is also called *self-denial*, which is, doing better things when it would be more agreeable to us to do worse things. When a man would merely germinate, and he arouses himself to be a thinker, that is self-denial. In other words, it is giving power to the intellect, instead of giving power to the flesh. When it would be more pleasant for a man to follow his fancy, and he is put upon following his moral sense, that is self-denial. And what is it but giving the control of the man's life to his conscience, instead of to his self-love? When a man would enjoy his own pleasure by sitting at home in the quiet covert of his household, and he goes out to seek and to save those who are lost, to rescue, and teach, and bear the troubles of those who are wayward and ignorant and tried, that is self denial. And what is that but teaching a man to act from the better part of his nature, rather than from his selfish instincts? You practice self-denial only when you act from a higher faculty though you are tempted to act from a lower one. When you act from a spiritual feeling, though you are tempted to act from a mere animal one; when, if you are tempted to act from the baser elements of your being, there is something in you which says, "Act as a man having a love-breeding nature;" when you rise up into your higher faculties, and act in them, then you are practicing self-denial.

But here comes in the solution of one of the mysteries of this life; viz.: that pain and glorious joy are quite reconcilable. There is not a man here, I hope, who does not know what it is to suffer and yet feel happier because he suffers. No man ever does a thing that requires particular exertion and makes him smart in the doing, and yet that is right, that he does not have the testimony of his reason and conscience that it was the thing to do, and is not happier for having done it. Many a man, under such circumstances, is able to

say, "While I suffered pain down where my lower nature is, up where my higher nature is I was gloriously glad." In the Bible you will find, all the way through, representations of men who rejoiced in infirmity; who were glad for suffering; who were happy because they were miserable; but the happiness and gladness and rejoicing must always be with the condition that if there are two kinds of faculties, one higher and one lower, the lower one suffers because the upper one has gained a victory over it. The upper one will be chanting its victory all the time, and the moanings of the lower one will scarcely be heard. If selfishness is wounded you will smart; but benevolence will be glad enough; and the gladness will more than make up for the smarting. If you are tempted by pride, and pride fights, and you overthrow it, the wound of pride will smart, and pride will cry out with pain; but conscience will fill all the realm above with a nobler and a better song of victory.

Thus, all suffering of the lower feelings, because they have been at fight with the higher, and have been whipped by them, will bring out the joy and the music of the higher. And there is no such transport as that which a man feels who suffers because he is on the side of God, on the side of a principle, and on the side of a great benevolence.

So it is that martyrs and heroes who have been witnesses for God, and have suffered for his cause, in all ages of the world, have been men who were able to rejoice with a glory of exquisite felicity which never was vouchsafed to self-indulgent men. For our joys increase as our faculties go up, and our sufferings increase as our beings augment. True suffering is the labor-pain of joy.

7. The highest suffering is that which men experience when they identify themselves with God's cause in this world, where the battle of their own deliverance is mainly waged; where the battle of their own lower life is mainly carried on; where the harmonization of their own faculties is to be effected by God's grace and training; where they have put themselves, as it were, out and over into the great sphere of human activity, and are living for other people and other interests than their own; and where by reason of these right and soul-satisfying courses, they feel that they are really the Lord's.

This is what is meant when it is said,

"If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."

He who makes Christ's cause in this world his own, goes up with it, or goes down with it, in joy or in sorrow, has the highest form of suffering. And it is a suffering which like the wings of a mighty angel bears one over the little that remains, and brings him near the very throne of God itself.

In application, I remark, first, that the great realm of sorrow and suffering in this world is not a lawless realm. There is nothing so dismal as for one to feel that he is born in life into a great whirl of light and darkness where there are accidents, contingencies, unregulated forces—perhaps fate, and perhaps demoniac influences; where things are loose and rampant. As at night storms howl in the sky, and torment the sea, and run riot every whither, without a master, so men seem to think it is in this world, and that blood, and groans, and sighs, and bereavements, and every form of mischief fill the world full, and that there is no God; or that, if there is, He hides Himself, and does not govern the world. But stop! There is not a drop of the water in the midnight storm of the sea which seems to be given over to misrule, that is not controlled by law, and does not act accordingly. And the wild caprice of night on the sea is as much under law as the formation of the crystal, or the growth of the fruit, or the development of any other influences upon the land. It is ordered of God; and though, to our look, the history of the human race, and the history of the world, has been one great unregulated whirl of manifold suffering without direction, and almost without profit, yet, after all, I think we may join Paul in his magnificent chant, and say,

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

This world is not abandoned, and it is not lawless; and suffering does not run riot as it pleases. Suffering is God's appointed minister, and is working in the sphere where He appoints it, and is doing His will; and by and by, when it has cleared off, it will be about suffering just as it is in the fictile factories where, when they paint vases with beautiful flowers and running vines, they are smeared with black, and put into the furnace, and remain black, and are black when they come out, until they are brushed, and the black disappears, and naught but these beautiful flowers and vines remain. Behind the groans, and behind the trouble, and behind the anguish of men in this world, God has been writing; and in the light of the eternal world, figures will come out, results will be seen, of which we have no conception here. It does not yet appear what we shall be. We are sons of God. We are much oppressed by suffering. We come through tears. There have been many in every age of the world who have been saved by the washing of their garments in blood. A strange bath! A strange white, that comes from crimson! But so it is. God took your companion; He humbled your pride; He scattered your property; He smote down your ambition; He made you a cripple, and rolled you out of the pale of industry, and left you dependent, and you are like a callow bird fed by some winged messenger.

God has, in all this vast sphere of various hindrances, and various attritions, and various outlying sufferings, an order. And it is no less God's because it is executed by natural law. For natural laws are God's fingers; natural law is the reaching out of God's right hand; natural law is the will of God throughout the universe.

I remark, secondly, Suffering must be used in this world. That is to say, it is not enough for us to comfort ourselves if we are afflicted. Many and many a one may be afflicted and not know what to do with his blessing. Many may be afflicted and yet not understand the affliction, and not work it out. As when one is sleeping in a room that is filled with smoke, and is half suffocated, and is, by a friend that is rushing to save himself, smitten heavily,—if he does not understand the warning he sleeps on and is consumed; as when, under such circumstances, the man not taking the hint does not rouse up and save himself, but perishes: so suffering often comes to little, because it is not interpreted; because men do not know the meaning of it; because they do not understand the direction that comes to them; because they do not study it, and endeavor to profit by it.

The first thought every man has in respect to pain or suffering, is as to the shortest cut to get rid of it. Your life is ore, and God puts you into the furnace, and kindles the fire; and when the draught begins to spread the heat, your first thought is of the quickest way to get the fire out, but not of the best way to get the metal out and leave the dross. Your only desire is to get away from the fire. Very few there are who have the grace, when God afflicts them, to say, "O! my soul, sit thou down as a disciple of Christ," and to say, "O Lord, what wilt thou? What shall it do to me? What secret is now to be disclosed? What better way is to be walked? What new strength is to be developed? What higher hope is to be awakened? What disininterested love is to be called into action? What hath this suffering brought to me?"

Suffering is as God's letter. Open it and read it. Many of you will find that you are titled, or that there is an inheritance laid up for you. But suffering needs to be studied, needs to be pondered, needs to be helped. For otherwise it may be as a blind or dumb messenger, unable to show you anything, or to lead you anywhere. How much suffering there is that is squandered in this life! How much suffering there is that seems to come from nowhere, and to go nowhere! And in the midst of all our sufferings in this life, while we maintain this general faith that it is a minister of God for our education, cautionary, disciplinary, formative; while we are carrying with us, as a kind of shield, this blessed thought, there comes in also the other thought—and the

two are nearly joined together—that the day of suffering is a short day, and that the day of remuneration is an everlasting day.

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

If I may stand at last before God, with all that which belonged to the material globe purged away; with all those forces, gigantic and intense, that allied me to the animal life below subdued and converted into a higher spiritual force; if I may stand there competent to understand things which were hidden from me here, with all the noblest instincts and intuitions of my nature purified and exalted, so that I shall be able to look God in the face and call him Father, and see him as he is—in that hour of coronation and of mighty triumph, what matter will it be if I have gained it through some tears, and many sorrows, and much suffering? The sufferings which we are going through, if they are not aimless, are full of promise to us.

Woe be to him then, that suffers and grows harder. Woe be to them who suffer and grow selfish. Woe be to them who suffer and sink down, and down, and down. Suffer as the vine does. The cutting off of the branch by the pruner's knife is not lost strength. The vine says, "If I may not grow in that direction, I will grow in some other direction." And so it pours new blood into the cluster; and more sugar goes to each grape. And God prunes those that he loves, that they may bring forth more and better fruit.

Is God dealing with you? Do not do as Paul did, even. Do not pray thrice that the suffering may be removed. Is God dealing with you and laying his cross upon you? Submit. Do not ask to have the pain taken away. Say, "Lord teach me how to use my suffering for thy glory. Teach me patience. Teach me faith. Teach me how to commingle joy with sorrow. Teach me how to see what I never should have seen but for these trials. Bring me nearer home. Train me in manhood. Make me more inwardly than I have been, and I care not for the outward experience."

Full blessed are they that are called, and that have this sign—*Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*

If you do not suffer at all, in the shape of care or disappointment or aspiration, or in any of the forms of affliction which are incident to the divine economy in this world, God says that you are not sons. If there is no strife, if there is no aspiration, if there is no breaking away from the lower forms in which you are clasped and held, then there is no birth-pain, and therefore there is no birth. But if you suffer, and are submissive and are instructed of God, suffering is sanctified to you. And then you are children of God. Then you are sons of

God. Though it does not appear how great the glory of that estate is, yet we know that we are the sons of God, and that when he shall appear we shall be like him, and see him as he is, and dwell with him forever and forever.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near thee with ever-increasing joy and hope, our Father, since thou hast made thy love manifest to us through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. We are not borne against fear, and in the face of storms, full of doubt, full of disaster, where so many have been whelmed and wrecked. For we have a sure word of prophecy and testimony. We are able to say I *know*. Our souls are better witnesses that thou art, and that thou art the rewarder of them that diligently seek thee, than any reasoning can be. We have felt thy presence. It is by the power of thine heart that ours have been buoyed up and carried mightily in the hour of our depression and weakness. How much we need thee! Still we walk in the strength let down upon us from above as if it were our own strength. We control the earth with all its manifold and hidden forces around about us as if this was our power. Thus we are living by the inflections of thy will which are the laws of this globe, and assuming to ourselves the skill and the knowledge which is all borrowed from thee. For in thee we live and move and have our being. And thus united with thee, how can we be harmed? How can anything befall those who put their trust in God? If thou art for us, who can be against us? Even trouble brings fruit and peace, and sorrows bring down joy.

We rejoice, O Lord! that thou art such an one; and that this great wearisome and long and lonely travailing world is not forgotten; and that the few lines of light which break upon it here and there, as through storm-clouds the sun sometimes breaks, are not all the light that is reserved for it. We rejoice that this great burdened mankind that so long have afflicted themselves and been afflicted, have a pitying God; and that thou art carrying them in thine arms, and that thou art looking forward to the day of consummation; and that even as the seasons bring forth little things that spring up and grow and ripen until they wax strong; so thou art strengthening the world, and thou art causing it to ripen more and more unto thy purposes.

And thou shalt bring forth in the world victory when tears shall cease to fall, and sorrows shall be forgotten, and men for songs shall forget groans and sighs. In that bright day thou shalt vindicate the administration of love. And while thou wilt make it manifest, full of truth and full of justice, it shall be fuller of mercy and overflow; and all the universal realm shall know that thou art a God omnipotent in love, and that thou hast caused the whole creation, as a tree of life, to shake down its blossoms and its blessed fruits. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly; for our faith is like to fail. The darkness is so great, the multitude of those that know not God is so large, and wickedness is so desperate, the suffering and the sighing from above and from beneath are so pitiful, that the whole creation groans together in pain. And dost thou not hear it? Are we only to hear and to know, and dost thou forget, sitting in the palaces of thy love and looking forth? Thou hast given us testimony of thy remembrance in thy Son; and having given him, thou wilt give all things that are needful. And time cannot mistake, nor go wrong, nor the world be wrecked. Whatever is dark (and there is much darkness brooding that will not rise), and whatever is strange and mysterious (and life is full of mystery to us, unknow-

ing and untaught), all is light before thee, that seest the end from the beginning. Love cannot go wrong. And when thou shalt have consummated all things and completed thy work, we shall behold it, and with all thy ransomed hosts shall pronounce it good. And in the faith of thee (not in our knowledge of thee), in the faith of God's love (not in our knowledge of the way in which love is working), we stand and will endure to the end.

And now, we beseech of thee, O Lord our God, that thou wilt vouchsafe help to every one in thy presence according to his special need. Some are in joy, and some are in sorrow. Some are in despondency and doubt, and some are in the utter confidence and expectation of hope. We pray that thou wilt draw near to all those in the sunlight and to all those in the shadow, alike. Grant unto them, this day, that portion of divine influence which they need. We pray that thou wilt grant that those who are in prosperity may know how to consecrate, of their own good will, their prosperity to God who loves them. And we pray that those who are walking in sorrow and in adversity may find the grace of God and the strength of God in them, and never leaving them nor forsaking them. And may none account the burden too heavy which God gives them the strength to bear. May none be unwilling to take his cross and bear it. Blessed be thy name that thou didst bow, that thou didst bend, that thou didst desire the trouble to be removed, and didst pray for it, but didst, by the blessed fortitude and endurance of love, drink the cup, and wouldst not suffer it to pass, since it was the will of God that thou shouldst drink it. And may we, more feeble and failing and fearing than thou wert, and with less discipline than thine, be able to bear the things that are not taken off at our cry. And if the thorn be piercing and painful, and we beseech thee thrice, grant, at least, that thy grace may be sufficient.

O Lord, may we suffer on, if suffering be our appointed lot. If we are to be disappointed, and our way is to be blocked up, it is the way of the Lord. Let him do what seemeth to him good. May we be able evermore to have this confidence, that God is our friend; and that life itself, with all its experiences, though we may not see it now, is our friend; and that we are ripening and preparing for the ministration of suffering as well as for joy,—for that rest which remaineth for the people of God. May we be brave. May we be enduring and patient unto the end. May we know how to outwork sorrow and trouble and care. May we know how to rejoice in the midst of suffering and infirmity. May we count it all joy when we fall into divers trials. May we be so elated with hope from above, with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that we shall not be cast down as other men are, but shall walk in the light. And may we know how to extract joy from suffering. So, we beseech of thee that we may be taught of God. And we pray that thou wilt, out of our sorrows and sufferings have it given to us to comfort those who are in like affliction. May we know how to go about doing good, and fulfill the law of our God in our example. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon any that are in thy presence to-day looking wistful, and yet feeling that they deserve no thought of God. They that are conscious of their sinfulness, and are overpressed with the conviction of their ill-desert; they that do not feel even that they have strength to avoid sin nor to turn away from it; that they have no Saviour whom they dare approach, and who, yet, need one above all others, and in whom there is a conflict between despair and the love of that which is evil. Lord Jesus, are not these thine own? Is it not the work of thy grace to succor just such? Wilt thou not appear for those that cannot help themselves? Thou that dost break open the prison door; thou that dost go out after the lost to find them and to bring them back; thou that dost not wait for prodigals to come close to thee and speak their whole speech, but dost burst out with thy love, full of overflowing joy and forgiveness upon them, hast thou not here many that thou wilt rescue by

thy grace and by thy power, for the honor and the glory of thine own name?

We pray for those who do not pray. We pray for the chidren of parents long since gone home, who have forgotten parental example, and have wandered from evil to evil.

Peradventure many have come up hither this morning, not knowing what brought them here. Is there not one wanderer in our midst this morning to whom thou art speaking already, and whose conscience is condemning him, but who is, after so long a time turning and going back toward his Father's house? We pray that many wanderers may be reclaimed. May there be many of those whose hearts have been hardened, that to day begin to experience a divine contrition. And we pray that thou wilt grant that we may know how to discern such, and how to succor them. And may every heart that to-day is conscious of Christ's grace, of his tenderness and forgiving mercy, and of his long-suffering, have some lesson, some message, some service for those that are bestead, for those that are hindered, for those that need succor. We pray that thy work may abound; that the truth may become a living power; that we may hear men beginning to rejoice who before have not known thee. And may this whole sanctuary be filled with the presence of our God, and with his soul-filling power.

Bless all thy Churches to-day. May thy servants that are appointed to preach the Gospel be more and more filled with God's power. If any of them are sick or in weakness or despondency, give them the light of thy countenance. And may they in the joy of the truth of thy salvation be able to go on in their way to the end, enduring patiently. And we pray that thou wilt unite thy people more and more. May we think more of the things in which we agree, and less of the things in which we differ. And we pray that thy Churches, united together in the love of God, and in patience with each other, and in the common strife of good will, and of doing good, may illumine all this land. May all the nations of the earth receive the tidings of thy Gospel. And may Jesus Christ become known, and his dear name be spoken in every language under heaven. May those who to-day, everywhere over the earth, are seeking to make the light shine in the darkness of heathendom be remembered of God; and may their hearts be comforted, and their hands strengthened.

We pray, our Father, that thou wilt speedily bring to an end the great war that shakes the earth. We pray that thou wilt grant that peace may bring with it justice, and that it may be such a peace that all the common people shall be fructified by it. We pray that dynasties that live by selfishness and by oppression may find their power waning, and that He whose right it is shall come and reign. We beseech of thee that thou wilt give light, and knowledge, and truth, and religion to the people, that they may find in Christ their birthright of liberty, and be able to sustain it, and not be corrupted by it. Oh! make haste. Is there not blood enough that flows to the horses' bridles? Are there not groans enough? Is there not misery enough? Lord, look out and rebuke the slaying and the slayer, and the destroying and the destruction. O Lord God! come, and let thy wings as the wings of a dove be outspread, and beneath the shadow of thy wings may the nations find rest.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

SELFISH MORALITY.

I shall speak to you this evening on the subject that is derived from the parable of the Prodigal Son, which I have just read in your hearing, and which is found in the fifteenth chapter of Luke's Gospel.

Although this is often preached from, it seems to me that the whole ground which is covered by it is very seldom looked at. Only half of it is generally employed; and surely, that is worthy of every consideration. It is in every respect one of the most exquisite of the recorded teachings of our Master. And it is fully as admirable a piece of art as it is a piece of instruction.

If you consider how our Master was surrounded with malignant watching enemies; if you consider that the very truths which it was necessary for him to preach were the truths which they most bitterly hated; if you consider that the mercy of God to all men was in their judgment treason to his peculiar people, and that the allegation of pride and of self-conceit and of hypocrisy against the Pharisees and the Scribes was to the last degree offensive; if you consider that these men were fanatical as well as malignant, and that there was danger, in any hour, that they would burst forth with such rage and fury to destroy the Saviour that it became necessary for him at times to veil his instruction; if, considering these things, you see how his parables were constructed, how they struck the very centre, and yet were presented in such pictorial forms that these men who grated their teeth over them could not well get hold of them, and were obliged to hear them; if you see how beautiful the parable is, and then see how it smites them under the fifth rib—if you see and consider these things, you cannot but feel that there was masterly execution of plan, and that there was masterly art in so covering a large ground of moral truth with few touchings—in the so speaking things that while they were absolutely simple, they were almost omnipotent in their effect. Such a consideration, I think, will not alone raise in our minds admiration for the power of Christ as an artist-worker in form, but will also add to the zest with which we then accept the moral instruction. For, after all, we shall feel more and more, as we study these things, that beautiful as they are, and admirable as they are, in form, it is the least of their excellence; and it is the richness of the interior that abides with us.

SUNDAY EVENING, Oct. 30, 1870. LESSON: LUKE XV., 11–31. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 1312, 865, 500.

There were three characters in this parable. It is aimed, unquestionably, at the Scribes and the Pharisees—the men that supposed they embodied in themselves every excellence that inhered in human nature and showed forth the purity of the temple. They had been keeping God's law, now, for some hundred years or more, with such rigor that they really felt that they had laid God under an obligation. He had said that if they would keep his law perfectly, their lands should be kept from the hands of the enemy; that they should govern themselves, and that they should govern other men as they had been governed. And they really believed that they had taken God at his word, and fulfilled every duty. Nay more, they had gone beyond the letter, and avowed it a moral duty, so that there might be ample margin; so that there should be no mistake. And they came to feel, "There, this is the promise, and we have fulfilled it to the letter, and more than to the letter; and now God is bound to fulfill his part of the covenant." And it was an enigma, it was a profound perplexity to their minds, why it was, with all these promises, that they were trodden under foot of the Romans, and despoiled as they had been. They could not understand that. For they were righteous men—that one thing they knew. There were other things that they were ignorant about; but they knew about this —that they were thoroughly good men. *Admirable* men they were.

Now, it became necessary for every one of them to be slain. It became necessary to strike the sword right home to this conceit in which their very life was bound up. And this parable of the Prodigal Son was aimed at them. That older brother is the Pharisee; and the younger brother is the Gentile—the outside man of the world. And we must bear in mind these two characters, because we have their parallel in our own midst. The Pharisee is not alone of Jewish extraction. There are Anglo-Saxon Pharisees. Just the same state of mind which was represented by the Pharisees of the temple, is still represented by the arrogant moralist and the purist of our own times.

There were, as I have said, these three characters—the sinning, impetuous young man, and the proper and well-behaved elder brother, and the father. They are all of them striking in the way in which they are delineated. The two sons come into mention at the very beginning, and in remarkable contrast. The young man, willful, wayward, apparently without much affection for his parents, at any rate headstrong, bent upon pleasure, demanded that his father should give him his patrimony. The father did so. The young man gathered up all that belonged to him, and went into a far country: and his life there was a life of utter dissipation. The other brother is introduced as a stayer-at-home. And, as we learn in the sequel, he was one who was rigidly obedient to his father. He studied the inter-

est of the place. He took care of the old man, and of all his possessions. He was a respectable citizen. No man could say ought against him. He staid at home and attended to his duty, and his whole duty, while that scapegrace of a younger brother had gone off, taking all the property that he could lay his hands on, had sunk from bad to worse, and had plunged to the bottom; and the last thing heard from him was, that he was reduced to the extremity of feeding swine, and eating their food.

Here are the two brothers—the older and the younger; and the contrast is a sad one. Here is the good older brother, the respectable older brother, staying at home and attending to his duty, an honorable citizen, an obedient son, an excellent man, and a most proper person; and there is that miserable, dissipated, wretched, besotted, young man, drinking, rioting in debauchery, wasting bodily strength, wasting purity of affection, wasting everything, bestializing himself, clear down to the bottom. And who would not want to be the older brother? I would not. I would rather be the younger one. But let us see.

How is the picture of this young man drawn? So that men will be fascinated with his career? No, I think not. Everybody's sympathy goes with him. You cannot help, when you read the parable clear through, being on the side of the young man. And yet, there is nobody in this world who thinks he did a good thing. Everybody feels that he was wicked, and that he was justly punished for his wickedness. Every single step is so drawn that, while your sympathy, in some sense, holds on to him, it is a sympathy that all the time is condemning him. There is an undertone all the while, in your heart, which says, "Well, he is reaping what he sowed. Since he has pursued, and will pursue, such a course, he must receive such punishment." And you condemn him, and punish him in your thoughts, as he goes on from bad to worse.

There is pleasure—that is the first step of a dissipated life. And there is excitement in it. There is a joyous period that belongs to it. Then comes the period of beginning shadows. Then comes some mingling bitterness with the cup. And the two elements change very fast. The bitter more and more predominates. And by and by the period arrives in which want and fear begin to come in, together with the consciousness which vice carries with it. Vice at the beginning is all bright; and so long as wicked men are prosperous they have no lack of friends; but when trouble comes it begins to be dark, and they become separated one from another, and find themselves without friends. For nothing in this world is so heartless, I was going to say, as men who have had fellowship in vice together. It is not always so. But one of the mysteries of long-continued vice is, that while it wastes

the body, it does mischief the heart; that it rubs out the finer feelings; that it not only takes away cordiality and sympathy from men, but leaves them selfish and hard as a stone. The worst mischief of vice is that it leaves men so without a heart.

This was an exceptional case, therefore. The career of this young man was not long enough drawn out to reach the very foundation. He "wasted his substance in riotous living." It was a swirl of intoxication that he was in. For it is said, "When he came to himself," etc. From the time that he left his father's house, clear down to the time when he was feeding swine, a lone exile, he was in a kind of insanity. He had been whirling through scenes of dissipation and debauchery. And now, with more temperate diet, and more select companionship (for I think he changed to advantage when he took the swine for his companions!) he came to himself. Better diet brought coolness to his brain; and these better companions did not lead him astray. His reason came back to him. And the moment his reason came back, he showed that there was something in him which had not yet been spoiled. He recognized his whole condition. He did not attempt to palliate it. He made no excuses. He heaped no reproaches on his companions, nor upon himself, even. The past was gone. He simply said to himself, "Well, I am worse than my father's slaves and hired servants; but this one thing I will do: I will go back on my track. I will retrace my steps. I will go home. I will go to my father, and will say to him that I have sinned." There was not one single exculpation. He felt that he had sinned, that heaven had seen his sin, and that God had noted it. And he determined, when he reached home, to say to his father, "I have sinned against heaven, and before thee. I am not worthy to be called thy son." He said to himself, "I will go home, and I will ask to be permitted to sit down with the servants." He had a heart yet which led him to desire to go back to his father's house. And such a heart as that has something recoverable in it. Vice had not washed out all the color. It had not ground all the enamel off. There was something sound at the bottom yet. He had been through a very wicked course, and yet everybody feels that there was, after all, something salvable in that young man's case—that there was softness, tenderness, recuperativeness of heart in him. You will take notice, also, that when he had set his face homeward toward his father's house, with the liturgy that he meant to recite, he was not permitted by that dear old man to get through all the humiliation that he had proposed for himself. For, long before he got in sight of his father's house, his father had got sight of him. Sorrowing love watches more for an outcast than repentance watches for one's own self. The father saw him before he saw the father, and ran to him.

Some might have said, "It is proper that there should be atonement made for offended parental authority; dignity and government require that the offender should go through a probation; it is necessary that he should confess." But love did not think so.

"When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

Oh! how easy it is to confess into the great open heart of love! and how hard it is to confess in the stern face of justice, of reproach, and of rebuke! But where there is the glowing heart of sympathy and of love, who could not bury his face in his mother's bosom and say, "Mother! mother! I have gone wrong"! Many a child a tender mother can save, whom a stern father would destroy utterly.

And so, in the representation of the divine mercy here, the word of God stands open like a mother's heart, waiting, nay, anticipating, nay, running after, the delinquent. And when he said, "I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son," his father would not let him say, "Make me as one of thy hired servants"; he cut that all off, and impetuously called for the robe, and the ring, and the shoes. And the boy needed them all, for he was a vagabond. But he had come to all the insignia of enjoyment and triumphant festivity. All were glad; the old man's heart was *very* glad; and it went out like a cataract.

And so the young man was rescued. Well, I am glad of it. He was too good to spoil so. There was something good in him. You see that he went by excess of social feeling. He was gentle; he was generous; he was affectionate. There was much nobility about him; and yet it all went wrong. But when, going wrong, experience touched his better qualities, he began to come back again. And everybody is on his side. Everybody goes with the young sinner. And everybody goes against the elder brother just as much. Yet he is the pattern young man. He is the man who is the admiration of the neighborhood. He is the man who thinks his life ought to be written and put in a book. He is the man who is so virtuous that he cannot look out of the window when a wicked man is staggering by. He is the man who prays every day, and thanks God that he is not as other men are. Oh! he is so strict! He has never neglected anything, that he knows of. He has kept the whole law. He has been good. He has staid at home, and taken care of his father, and especially of his father's *property*. Well, as he came in from the field where he had been meditating upon his excellence, he heard an uncommon noise in the paternal mansion; and he called out to one of the servants (for there were a great many of them running hither and thither on strange errands) and said, "Come here—what is all

this?" And the servant said, in his great haste (for he had but time for a hasty reply) "Thy brother is come. This feast is of thy father's making, for joy of his restoration." And the young man was angry. So angry was he that he would not come in.

As near as we can learn, when this younger son went away from his father's house, he went, not only to the great grief of his father, but with the express disapprobation of the elder brother. And, as near as we can learn, the elder brother then dismissed him from all further sympathy, and from all further inquiry. We do not learn, at any rate, that he made any question as to where he had gone, or what had happened to him. But there were tidings of the absent one, because it is declared that he had wasted his substance in riotous living, and with harlots. That is all. The elder brother neither went for him, nor sent for him. Nor did he show any anxiety about his recovery. And when he did come back he was angry. All the natural affections that should have rejoiced seemed to have been deadened in him.

He was a good man, you know—this elder brother. It is not to be supposed that he cheated anybody. He was fair in his bargains. It is not to be supposed that he diverted the revenue, or swore false oaths of any kind. He was a respectable man. He was a moral man. He every day went to the paternal mansion and discharged every duty that was incumbent upon him. He was a proper liver. He restrained inordinate appetites. He was not a drunkard. Neither was he a lascivious man. He was a good man, a respectable man—this elder brother. The only thing that seemed to be wrong about him was that he had not any heart—and that is a good deal for a man to have left out of him. His brother he did not care for. He had been gone; and it did not seem to burden or afflict him. He had taken no pains for his restoration. When he came from the field, on what point did he get angry—this respectable, decorous, exemplary brother, that had staid at home to be virtuous? Why, that *he* had never had such a spontaneous burst of joy over *him* as was manifested over this scapegrace of humanity who had come back, after spending his father's "substance with riotous living."

It would take a miracle to get enthusiastic over such a man as this elder brother. There was not a thing about him to kindle a fire of enthusiasm with. He was hard, he was unsympathizing, he was cold to every one but himself. Faithful? Yes, mechanically faithful. And so are machines. But they are without benevolence, without sympathy, and without self-sacrificing succor for those who are in trouble. He did not pity sin.

Now, any man who only hates sin is of the devil—for the devil hates, though he does not hate sin. Sin is to be pitied; and no hatred is right that is not mingled with pity. This elder brother did not care for the restoration of the younger brother. "It is his lookout," was his philosophy. "He must lie down on the bed he has made. He chose his course, and let him follow that course. I chose my course, and you see what it has eventuated in. I trust I may say, without flattery, that virtue in me has brought forth its appropriate reward." But this younger brother he did not care for. Nay, he was very angry that the father cared for him. The old man was getting weak in his old age, and had brought back this son, and was opening the house, and pouring out the treasure, and calling in the neighbors, and there was the sound of music and dancing in the house—for Christ was not afraid to have folks dance when he made a parable. He made men merry, and made them dance, and life was life, when he was making a picture for the instruction of the times. And the elder brother was angry that the restoration of the younger brother excited such transports of delight, while his cold, stolid selfishness never excited one single flash of enthusiasm—not one.

Well, the parable ends here; but before I go further, I wish to call to your view another touch that is omitted in our observation, too often; and that is, that the old father did not swear at this wayward son, nor thunder indignation at him, as you and I would have been very likely to do. The beauty of the paternal love is kept up all the way through. While the father has been so lenient and forbearing to his dissipated son, and brought him to his heart, in a moment, without probation, in utter faith; so, on the other hand, when the hatefulness of this selfish elder brother was shown, and that right in the gush of the father's joy, he expostulated with him just as tenderly as a mother with her child, and said to him, "Thou art ever with me. All that I have is thine. Why should I make a special offering. You have everything all the time. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad, for this thy brother. He was dead, and is alive again. He was lost, and is found." There was no reproach. There was no bitterness. So that even toward this other kind of sin—the sin of sordid selfishness—God is very patient. God is very sorry for the miser. God is very sorry for the proud moralist. God is very sorry for the self-righteous. God is very sorry for hypocrisy. God is very sorry for everything that goes wrong, and that stumbles. God is a father; and if you go wrong by your passions, He is sorry for that. And if you go wrong by your selfishness, He is sorry for that. If you sin with the clenched hands of avarice, He is sorry for that. And He is willing to help anybody, whatever may be the way in which he has gone astray.

He is willing to be gentle, to be lenient toward him. He is willing to be helpful, and to bring him back by the great power of His heart's love.

Dismissing, then, the story, let us see if there are not in it some points of application which we should do well to take heed to. Every one can see that Christ meant us to put the elder brother below the younger. He so constructed this admirable little drama, that everybody, after reading it, would take sides with the young brother against the old brother. The reason is not that the wickedness of the younger brother was venal and slight; because everybody who reads it feels that it was very wicked. Everybody feels the disgracefulness of his career. Our sympathy with him does not touch the wrong-doing at all. Our sympathy is on account of the resiliancy, the rebound, that was in him. The point of his recuperableness is where our sympathy comes in. We do not say that he was unblameworthy. We do not say that his vices were mere foibles and faults. We do not say, "Oh, the young will be young; they must sow their wild oats." We do not say anything of the kind. The story is so drawn that everybody feels the exceeding sinfulness of sin in his conduct. And yet when it is finished every one feels, "Bad as he is, I would rather be he than to be the other." And I think the Saviour meant that that should be the feeling. At the bottom the young man had goodness. The top was all bad in him. The elder brother was good at the top, but at the bottom he was all corrupt. In the sight of God, men who are outwardly righteous, who are without sympathy for their fellow-men, who are selfish, who are heartless, who are self-content and self-seeking, are worse, and are more hateful, and are under a more terrible condemnation, than those men whose genial nature has taken them into dissipation. This is a thing not to be said slightly; but if there is any one thing about which we may speak certainly concerning the teaching of Christ, it is that the having a dead heart was the worst wickedness which a man could commit in this world. There is nothing worse than that.

Let us look at one or two other points, and see if this case is exceptional. Look at the parable in the next chapter to this.

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day."

You recollect that scene. It is one of those transcendently felicitous Dantean visions. It is part of the *Inferno* of the New Testament. There was to be a conversation between the saved in the bosom of Abraham in heaven, and one of the lost in hell; and in selecting the man who was to enact the part of the lost, who was selected? A robber? A thief? A traitor to his country? A man high-handed in crime or dissolved in wasting dissipation? No, he selected a rich man,

a man well-placed in the world, a man "clothed in purple and fine linen," who "fared sumptuously every day."

Now, is it a sin to be rich? No, no, certainly it is not a sin to be rich. It is your duty to be rich, if God has armed you with the faculties of wealth making—with the power of amassing property. Well, is it wrong for a man to be "clothed in purple and fine linen"? Why no. A man may be just as proud and just as vain under drab as under purple. It is not what a man has on him, but what a man has in him that determines his pride. There is no wrong in wearing purple, any more than in wearing silk; and wearing silk is not a crime any more than wearing woolen; and wearing woolen is not a crime any more than wearing tow. It is not the dress, but the reason why the dress is worn, that determines the right or the wrong. It is what the dress covers that is to be commended or condemned. This man was rich; but that was not faulty. He was "clothed in purple and fine linen;" but that was not blameworthy. "He fared sumptuously every day;" and if he carried it to the degree of dissipation, and violated the law of love, he did wrong; but if not, he was no worse for that. It is not a sin for a man, if he be able, to spread an abundant table. And a man commits no sin if he be a hearty eater, provided he is active, and keeps within the bounds of digestion. And he commits no sin in eating good things—delicacies and the like—if he gets them honestly, and does not go to excess in eating them. It was the kernel that was meant to be eaten, and not the cob. A man that has the means has the right to spread a generous table. It was not that, then, that was against him.

"There was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table; moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores."

Now look at the exquisite implication. There is not a word said; but you know, as well as I do, that that poor beggar came there, and that the rich man was too big to spend his time looking after beggars. He had seen the loathsome wretch; but he was not enough moved by compassion to send him a morsel. He never sent anything to him. He never took even his off-cast purple and fine linen for the clothing of the beggar. We are left to understand that this well-dressed man, this man that was rich, and was "clothed in purple and fine linen," and that "fared sumptuously every day," used his riches and luxuries just for his own selfish self. That was the trouble. There was the man right before him, groaning; and the dogs were kinder than the rich man. They did play doctor and nurse to the poor fellow's wounds; but the rich man cared not a particle for him. And he went to hell, where he ought to have gone—if anybody ought to go

there. A man whose opportunities, whose education, whose providential mercies, have lifted him into strength and amplitude of means, and who employs the regality of God's bounty—his own reason, his own executive skill, his own genius and accomplishments, all his means and treasures—only to wrap himself round and round and round with the silken, soft web of selfishness—if he be not damnable, none is. And the higher, the brighter, the stronger and the more he is in the sight of men, the worse it is for him; for the greater is the prostitution of his power, and the greater is the perversion of himself. No man can live in God's government with selfishness without being a traitor. There is no virtue, no morality, no respectability, where men's hearts are not controlled by sympathy and by love. The indispensable condition of every element of manhood is, that it should have vital relations to love. If it have not these relations, it is damnable, not for what it is, but for what it misses and lacks.

There is another scene recorded in the twenty-first chapter of Matthew, which is even more pronounced, if it were possible, than this. That you may know exactly to whom he said this, I will read the twenty-third verse:

"When he was come into the temple, the chief priests and elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority dost thou these things?'"

He goes into a discussion with them; and in that discussion he gives the account, or rather the short parable, of the two sons.

"A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, 'Son, go and work to-day in my vineyard.' He answered and said, 'I will not'; but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir,' and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father. They say unto him, 'The first.' Jesus saith unto them, 'Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.'"

This Jesus said to the chief priests; to the elders of the people; to the most religious men that there were at that time; to those that were the most eminent and the most respectable; to those that stood highest, and that were examplers of morality.

"For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him. And ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him."

What is the point of condemnation here? Not that harlotry is more venial than other immoral courses. Not that a moral man is worse than a dissipated man. It is the question of recoverability. It is a question of the possibility of a man's being cured. And the declaration, of course, is, that a sinner—that is, a publican—knows his deterioration, and knows the wickedness of it. There is a conscience behind his wrong-doing, and that conscience gives him a chance to recover. He recognizes the fact that his heart is wicked, wicked, wicked;

and there may come a time when hope and mercy and divine call shall come to him. And then, in that hour, he will not pretend to be good, he will confess his sins; and nothing will stand between him and salvation.

But a Pharisee, who has been building himself up by his morality, is so good, so respectable, so observant; he has so few faults, and so many excellencies, that when the word of God comes to him, he does not believe that he is a sinner. It is harder, therefore, to convict such a man; and the chances of his coming into the kingdom of God are less, than in the case of the immoral man. He thinks so well of himself that the immoral man, or the harlot, is more likely to go into God's kingdom than he is. The immoral man knows that he sins, and acknowledges it; the harlot is conscious of being a great sinner, and says of harlotry, "It is a hideous sin;" so that, after all, they are more accessible to recuperative influences than the moralist who spends most of the time in being proper, and the rest of the time in praising himself for it.

To bring it a little nearer home, there are a great many of you by whom perhaps this discourse is not so much needed; and yet, there are many of you who do not think it comes home to you, that ought to take it home to yourselves. If there be any person here who, being a member of the church, baptized early, brought up by Christian parents, having received dissuasions from evil, and warnings against evil company, so that he has held himself wholly aloof from the wicked and the over-tempted; if there be such a person here, who has not only a horror of wickedness, but a horror of wicked men; if there be a person here whose heart, when bad men are brought to grief, is steeled against sympathy, and who stands in the midst of the tempted and sinning mass of men without anything that makes him feel that he is brother to them, and without any responsive thought in his heart,—he is standing in the place of the elder brother.

There is not a man that lives who is not your brother. There is not a man that carries the load of his own transgression; there is not a man that is harried through pain and through nerve, who is not joined to you. You are brother to every man, though he is wicked, and though his wickedness has found him out, though perhaps it will not leave him to the very end, and though he may die in his sins. His degradation and sin, though his case may seem hopeless, are no reason why the house of your heart should be shut against him. There should be a heart open to him; and it should be your heart. Because you are Christian or moral, you should be more considerate of those who are not so. But if you shut your heart, and say, "I live

virtuously, and I therefore am better than these men who live unvirtuously; and if they will live unvirtuously they must take the consequences; it is none of my business," beware; for that is not the spirit of the Master.

There are a great many of you who have an ideal in life. Ideals are very intangible; but, after all, there are very few things which are so potential in life as an ideal in an energetic nature—the pattern which he sets up before him, and toward which he is forming his whole life. There are a great many whose ideal of life is self-culture and refinement. They are toiling to keep themselves from all coarseness; and that is right. They strive to keep themselves from all that is degrading; and that is right. Their ideal of life is, that yet they shall be able to secure a place where no rude wind will come on them, and where they will be shielded from the crashing discords of this world. It is their ideal of life that they will by and by be able to build their crystal dome so high that they shall not hear the groans and sighs and noises that come from the wickedness of men—so high that their hearts will be separated from quick sympathy with the hearts of men that travail in pain.

If God gave you genius; if God gave you imagination; if God gave you tender sensibility; if God gave you love for music, and love for literature, he did not give you these things as so many feathers put into the nest of selfishness, to be pressed by your breast alone. God gave you these royal lights that you might use them, first for yourselves, and then also for others. You are joined to your kind; and if you are like your Father in heaven, who "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust;" if you have all excellencies, while they are building you up in refinement and virtue, they will at the same time lead you to pity those who are in transgression.

One word more, and only one; and that is with reference to a danger which merchantmen, who are seeking wealth, are subject to, and ought to be warned against. Beware of taking the power that wealth gives you, to build a house with walls so thick that you cannot hear the sounds of men who sigh in the street. Beware that you do not build your banqueting-hall so that you cannot see the beggar full of sores that lies at your door. Beware of using your virtue and your prosperity as means of separating yourselves from that great sinning, suffering mass of mankind to which Christ came, and to which he sends you, that, in your place, imitating him, you may be according to the measure of your strength a saviour, as he was.

There is nothing that you may not have. Build yourselves up in

all morality, and in all excellence, and in all refinement, and in all art, and in all beauty, and in the power of wealth, and, if need be, in all publicity. These are always right when you have a heart of love to vivify them, and direct them, and control them. But when they change the heart, and leave you an idol of selfishness, woe to you! The publicans and the harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before such a man.

Beware of refined selfishness. Beware of æsthetic selfishness. Beware of aristocratic selfishness. Beware of the selfishness of prosperity and of respectability. Beware of the temptation of the devil. Beware of anything that shall make you indifferent to the sufferings and to the condition of those who are cast down by reason of their sins—for you, in your estate, are sinners, dependent, every hour and every moment, on the goodness of a pitying God. Be you to your fellows what God is to you.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON

Grant unto us, our Heavenly Father, that same blessed invitation that hath so often brought us to thee, and so often made the way familiar and easy to be trodden. For it is not our outward want alone that can bring us to thee. We turn everywhere, and seek succor in everything until we have learned how blessed it is to seek our good of thee. And then, the memories of past mercies; then the sense of thy great goodness and condescension, and the beauty of thy face, revealed to us in times past, awaken in us earnest desires. Our souls long for thee more than all else; for thou only canst fill the solitary hour, and thou only canst cheer the despondency which comes to all; and thou only canst bring peace to the heart disturbed by pride and selfishness; and thou art the only physician of the soul; and all other things are but poor; all other things but disguise and do not cure. It is thy soul that cures our soul. It is thy love that teaches us to love. It is thy goodness that begets goodness in us. Be pleased then, O our Father! to call us by our names, that we may know that we are remembered of thee, and are sought out of thee and are borne in everlasting remembrance.

We thank thee that thou hast made known to us thy paternity. And though we do not understand it, and, with the little light of our own experience, cannot follow thee as Father of the wide scope of universal government, nor solve all the strange things that come to pass beneath thy wide extended sway, yet we are content. We leave to the future these insoluble mysteries. We trust in thy love. We trust in thy justice, and in thy truth. We believe that thou wilt not forsake any that put their trust in thee; and that whatever things are dark now, shall be cleared by and by. Thou art saying to us, "What I do now ye know not; but ye shall know hereafter;" and to that hereafter we remit all our care, all our anxiety and outreaching questionings, and trust thee. Even as children trust their parents long before they can understand them, and trust in simplicity, trust unquestioning, and learn by learning, so we desire to abide in thee. Thou art good; and thou doest good; and Love is thy name; our hearts go up unto thee; and in thy name will we trust.

Be pleased, in thine infinite mercy, to forgive all our past sinfulness, and to cleanse our hearts from all things that are offensive to thee, and make us lovely altogether in thy sight. And we pray that thou wilt help us, and that we may not be discouraged as we find difficulties and obstacles in our way. May we still press forward, and to the end may we walk along the straight and narrow way, that finally we may be saved.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest, to-night, upon all that are gathered together. If there be darkness without, may it be calm and light within. And grant that here in thy sanctuary we may find a home: grant that here we may find our brethren, and rejoice with them. We pray that thou wilt prepare us by the labor, and by the enjoyment, and by the instruction of the Sabbath day, for the toil of the campaigning week. May we go forth to our avocations, to our care, and to our responsibility with the presence of the Lord forevermore overshadowing us. May we not forget the lessons of the sanctuary. May we find them every hour a shield, or a weapon of offence, against wickedness. May we be strengthened. May our faith not fail us in all the darkness of the way. May there still be the light of thy truth that shall guide us. And we pray that thou wilt prepare us, by the thousand experiences of thy providence—by good and evil that are coming upon us; by pain, and by fears, and by disappointments, and by expectations fulfilled, and by all the blessings of hope and love, and by the medicine of sorrow and trouble—to be men in Christ Jesus. Prepare us to be worthy of our name—*sons of God.* Prepare us for dying; through death lead us gently into that life which shall know no dying. And there, in thy presence, we will give the praise of our salvation to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt add thy blessing to the word of exhortation and instruction. May we take heed to our ways. May we remember that to love the Lord our God with all our heart and our neighbor as ourself is the law; and may we feel that in breaking this, the law of the realm is broken. May we be afraid of all sin. May we be afraid of heartless selfishness. Let us not be separated from our kind. And by as much as we are lifted above them, may we use the space to draw them up to us again. And so in every advance, may we bring some with us. Grant that we may more and more interpret thy nature, and understand more and more what is the sacrifice of Christ. And bring us, at last, through our earthly experiences, purified, glorified, into the heavenly kingdom, where we will praise the Father, the Son and the Spirit. *Amen.*

IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE THINGS.

"Then Saul said to Jonathan, Tell me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him, and said, I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand, and lo, I must die. And Saul answered, God do so, and more also; for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan,"—Samuel XIV., 43, 44.

There was never a better cause worse plead than this of Jonathan. The right was all on his side, but his pleading was good for nothing. We shall understand this better, if we go back now, and come down for a few minutes along the history that led to this transaction, as it is contained in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of the first of Samuel. We must not carry back modern ideas to interpret the ancient ideas. We must not imagine that Israel at this time was a civilized people. We must not imagine cities such as existed in the time of our Saviour. They were a rude people. Although in some respects they were superior to their neighbors, in most respects they were not a whit higher in civilization than the Philistines themselves. A better moral light they had; but their social habits were no better. Their cities were rude assemblages of ruder huts. Their army was a mob. Chance determined their battles. Sometimes it was on the one side, and sometimes on the other, according to the nature of the men engaged. And Israel had sunk to a very low point at this time. Saul was a king not a whit more royal than an average Indian chief on our prairies. He was a king without a palace. He was a king without any of the circumstances and trappings of royalty as we now conceive of them.

Just at this time, Israel was at such a point of depression, having been over-run and defeated by the Philistines, that there were no armies in the land. And yet, beaten down as they were, a great incursion of the Philistines was made upon them.

North of Jerusalem, or, rather, in the southern part of Palestine, on the west, was the great plain of the Philistines—a sea-coast or maritime plain. And on the east was the valley of the Jordan. Intermediate, the country rose in high mountainous ridges, and yet was somewhat of the nature of table-land. Upon the summit of this central part of southern Palestine was a very rich farming or pastoral

SUNDAY EVENING, Nov. 6, 1870. LESSON: PSALMS II. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 660, 627 372.

district; and along this ridge, running north from Jerusalem as far as Gerezim and Ebal, or Shechim, and coming down into the plain, was the great battle-ground of Palestine. It was back and forth over that country particularly that these endless Philistine wars flowed. At this time, the Philistines had come up with an enormous army—with thousands of chariots—the chariots probably not ascending further than the bottom of the ravines of the maritime plain. Israel had scattered and fled every whither from the face of the enemy. Saul had tried to collect about six hundred men; and he was lying at the uttermost space in Gibeah of Benjamin. And he and Jonathan alone had arms. There were no swords; there were no spears; there was no armor. The Philistines would not permit them to have forges. If they needed to sharpen their hoes, or their spades, or the colters of their plows, they must go down into Philistia. To keep them disarmed this method was resorted to.

Well, this was the condition of things. There were three great parties of the Philistines that had gone spoiling, one northward, and another southward, and another eastward, ravaging all the lands; and here was this little band of six hundred men, and the king, lying under a tree at Gibeah watching them.

One day, moved by one of those strange inspirations which sometimes come to men, looking up the ravine (on either side of which were two very high cliffs—one of which was named "Thorn Bush," and the other "Shining Cliff," because it was white and glistening, the limestone there being of a chalky nature)—looking up that ravine, with these two cliffs (the Thorn Cliff and the Shining-Faced Cliff) on either side, they saw the garrison of the Philistines upon the top. And Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "Let us climb up there." Two men! Well, he had a brave fellow for an armor-bearer; for he said, "You go, and I will follow!" And Jonathan said, "If they say, 'Stand still where you are,' I shall take that for a sign that God does not mean us to succeed; but if they say, 'Come up hither,' then I shall take it for a sign that the Lord has delivered them into our hands." And so they began to climb up the ravine until they were discerned by the garrison; and they looked over at them; and—perhaps in derision, I do not know why—some fellow said, "Come up hither, and I will tell you somewhat." And Jonathan said, "Let us go up; for the Lord hath delivered them into our hands." And they went up. And the moment they reached the top they laid about them most violently; and Jonathan and his armor-bearer slew twenty men before they knew what they were doing—and that, too, as it is said, *in the space of half an acre, or what a yoke of oxen might plow in a day.*

At this time there occurred, apparently, an earthquake. For it is said that there was a great shaking of the ground. This precipitate attack, this slaughter of a few men, and the rumor of it that went out, produced one of those panics which rude and undisciplined armies are subject to. They did not know what ailed them, and they all turned to flee; and, thinking that the enemy were upon them, they began to strike right and left to slay the enemy, and slew themselves with terrible slaughter.

Saul was watching on one side and on the other, and tidings were sent down to him that there was a great movement in the camp above; and he called for his men, and they went up, and he with them, and began to pursue. And it is said that then all the deserters in the camp of the Philistines—those that had gone up to them—the turn-coats—the moment the Philistines began to flee, whipped out their weapons and went at them too, and began to slay them. And all those who had hid themselves in the caves (for that whole mountain region is seamed and honey-combed, and from that fact was a place of concealment, not only for men, but for treasures)—all those who had hid themselves, as soon as tidings came to them that the Philistines were fleeing (and it is astonishing how tidings will go sometimes) came out and were brave enough. The men who did not dare to do a thing in the beginning, and who were such cowardly fellows as to go over to the enemy and make peace with them, were very courageous when they found that the enemy were discomfited, and were not afraid to kill men that were running away from them. And all the skulkers and hiders were courageous enough when they were behind the enemy's back, and very boldly smote and thrust and ran through men that were already vanquished by fear, borrowing the Philistines' own weapons to slay them withal.

And so there went on through the woods a terrible slaughter right and left. And as Saul came up and saw what work was going on, he issued his command that no man should take food that day. And the command was not an unreasonable one; for many a victory is lost by plundering. Seeing the discomfiture of the enemy, perceiving their utter overthrow, he knew that the temptation would be to despoil the camp of the Philistines, and gather the plunder. He forbade the people from doing it, in the general expectation that they would be tempted to do it. And it was a wise thing. He said, "Let no man eat until the sun goes down."

Jonathan had been gone; he was far away, in hot pursuit of the enemy; and he did not hear that command. And as he went through the woods, seeing honey dropping, he put forth his rod and ate "a little." I do not know that he knew how much he ate. When a man is very hungry, he cannot tell how much "a little" is. But he

was refreshed by what he ate; his waning strength came again; and he went on fighting and chasing the enemy once more.

The people were very much spent, but they continued beating their adversaries clear on to sundown. Then they were permitted to eat. And they fell upon the sheep and the oxen and the calves, and slaughtered them, and ate them in their blood, so hungry were they. And they were reprimanded for that. But they were under the necessity of taking these animals and eating them in some way.

When Saul came up, he had it in his heart to renew the pursuit that night; and he consulted the prophet to see whether they should hasten on and utterly cut up the Philistines, root and branch. But he got no answer. And he said, "Some one has committed a sin; and that is the reason the Lord has not answered me." So he determined to cast lots, and find out who it was that had sinned. And they cast lots; and the tribes of the Israelites were on one side, and Saul and Jonathan were on the other; and Saul and Jonathan were alone uncleared, when all the Israelites had been cleared; and the thing lay between them.

"And Saul said, Draw ye near hither all the chief of the people: and know and see wherein this sin hath been this day. For as the Lord liveth, which saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die. But there was not a man among all the people that answered him. Then said he unto all Israel, Be ye on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side. And the people said unto Saul, Do what seemeth good unto thee."

They were not our people. Oriental monarchs were allowed to do what they pleased. Occidental democrats are not.

"Therefore Saul said unto the Lord God of Israel, Give a perfect lot. And Saul and Jonathan were taken: but the people escaped [and glad they were]. And Saul said, Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son. [It was close work by this time.] And Jonathan was taken. Then Saul said to Jonathan, Tell me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him and said, I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand, and lo, I must die. And Saul answered, God do so, and more also; for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan."

That was more than Roman rigor of mistaken justice. But the best of it is to come yet. The people were seized with an inspiration of generosity. They had not seen the wonderful spectacle of deliverance wrought by the bravery of this one man in vain.

"And the people said unto Saul, when it came to this [obsequious as they had been], Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not."

Good people! Cowardly people at first—but they ended brave enough, and withstood the fury of the king—though I suspect that Saul was not very unwilling to have his son rescued.

I said that Saul had a right to give this general order that there should be no stopping; that that day should be dedicated to the overthrow of the enemy; that no man should taste food. And yet, in this, as in all of Saul's conduct, there was a certain excess—an immoderation which carried it to rashness. For, while, as a general order, it was wise, to make it special and particular was not wise. And Jonathan, when he was arraigned by his father, had two pleas that he might have made, if he had been wise enough to make them. The first was, that he was absent when the command was given, and that he knew nothing of it until he was informed by the people after he had eaten the honey. That would have been a sufficient plea. Or, another better one he might have made, and that is the one which he did make to the people. Jonathan, when he was told that his father had cursed the man who should eat anything that day, said,

"My father hath troubled the land. See, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey. How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely to-day of the spoil of their enemies which they found? For had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?"

That was so. If the people had been refreshed by a moderate amount of food—which the king might well have winked at—they might have had greater strength, and made the overthrow still more victorious. So, then, he could have plead to his father, "I did not know the command; nor could I have known it, God's providence had placed me so." But, still better, he might have said, "The king commanded that which was contrary to the public welfare; and I, acting as a general under him, had a right to take the responsibility and disobey the command, when I saw that the thing which the king desired—viz., the overthrow of the enemy—could better be gained by disobedience; and I took the responsibility, and told the people to eat, and ate myself." That would have been a sufficient answer. For, it is held that, while a subordinate is always to obey his leader under ordinary circumstances; yet no man is fit to be a military general who will not on occasion take the responsibility of breaking an order. It is held that an exigency may arise in which the thing that the commanding general desires to gain, can be better gained by disobeying his order than by obeying it. But the subordinate must understand that if he breaks the command it is at his own risk; and that if he is mistaken he gets the penalty, while if he is right he gets the reward. And so, Jonathan, seeing that the way to carry out Saul's purpose was to disobey his commandment, had a right to plead that. Had he done so, he would have stood before the king acquitted. But what did he do? I said at the opening of this discourse that he made the poorest plea for a good cause that ever was made. Instead of saying,

"I did not know your commands;" instead of saying, "Under God's providence the time came when that command ought to have been set aside for the sake of destroying the Philistines"—instead of saying these things, he said, "I did but taste a *little* honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand."

Oh! It was *such* a little! Well, is not a little always just enough for disobedience? A little is as important as a great deal, when it is the question of obedience or disobedience. Besides, there was in his heart the idea that moral quality depended in some sense on magnitude. And he was not alone in that. We hear yet a great deal said about little sins and little things. Men plead littles, and littles, and littles. And I have selected my subject to-night, because it seemed to me that a consideration of this matter of magnitude would be a very great help in clearing many minds from casuistry, and in setting forcibly before you the importance of a great many things which have vital relation to your safety, your character, your habits, and your destiny, but which are inconspicuous, which are easily passed by, and which are mostly neglected.

There is, I would say, before I proceed, a difference between moral values. There are great moral causes, and there are small moral causes. I would say still further, that men should not confound things that are little with things that are great, as sometimes they do. There are those who think that to work on Sunday is a sin as great as to destroy life. They make no distinction between acts. There is no perspective in their consciences. They get things mixed. And they are as much afflicted for small offences as for the weightiest sins, or even for crimes.

Now, there are distinctions; but they do not depend upon conspicuity, nor upon measurement, nor upon weight. It is not the amount of space that the thing occupies, nor the impression which it produces upon your eye, nor any external circumstance of this kind, that determines what is little and what is great. That is little which has little power, and that is great which has great power. But it oftentimes happens that the smallest thing, as the eye sees it, and as the senses recognize it, has the greatest power, and therefore is large; whereas, voluminous things, things huge in space and in impression, have in them very little moral influence, and therefore are small. But we are to transfer our ideas from the small realm of sense to the great moral realm. It is the effect which a thing is competent to produce that determines whether it is great, or whether it is little. And as a single grain of powder has in it more power than twenty tons of rock, so, frequently, the smallest circumstance in a man's moral history has more power in it than vast things in other relations.

Little things become important as a part of a series—that is, by aggregation. They collect, and become powerful unities.

A man asks you to see, floating in the air, the smallest film. It is the merest fragment of a fragment of a bit of wool. You cannot discern it except when the slanting beams of the sun, through the window, give to the afternoon air the peculiar quality of revealing what it contains. Then, among a million other motes, you can perhaps discern the tiniest bit of a floating mote. And as you look, you open your watch, and take out your key; and as you move through the air, that littlest bit of woolen fiber chances to strike the watch just where the key goes in. And you wind the watch, and think but little about it. And that little mote is seated within. And after a day or two, by winding the watch, it has been pushed on. And it creeps clear into the watch. And in the course of a week it finds its way near to a wheel. And then comes another little bit after it. Then there comes a speck; and then another speck. And in the course of months and months, so many little motes find their way into this same little keyhole that the watch is said to be "dirty." There are a thousand motes inside of the watch that have found their way there little by little. And what have they done? Broken any of the wheels? Not one of them. Have they disfigured any of the works? Not at all. Have they militated against the spring? Not at all. They merely lie up against the pivot, one and another and another, and just drag it; and the watch holds back just a little, and loses, and loses, and loses time. And the watch being neglected, these little motes, collecting on the works, have power enough, by multitude, to take away from the machinery its power to keep time. They have destroyed its functions and its efficiency. There is not one of them that was not so small that you could scarcely see it, unless you saw it by the help of a sunbeam or a magnifying glass; and yet, coming in one by one, adding one to another, and lying in juxtaposition, they interfere with the machinery of the watch. And if you had taken a hammer and broken the watch to pieces, you would not have destroyed its time-keeping qualities more effectually than they are destroyed by letting the soil of the atmosphere into it. And if the watch be that of a navigator, the difference in time caused by these obstructions may be just the difference of his going right to the mouth of the harbor, and his going upon the shoal. Hence great interests may be determined by just so little a thing as a bit of dust. These little things are very insignificant when floating in the air; but when they are brought one after another into contact with sensitive machinery, are they not important? They cease to be little when measured by what they have done. Little things may be important by what they draw after them.

I can imagine, in the visions of the night, as the old miller sleeps, that a craw-fish comes to him and threatens him. You know what a craw-fish is. It is a homely little fresh-water lobster, that loves water and mud. He threatens the miller with disaster except upon some condition granted. The surly old miller laughs to scorn the threat of the craw-fish. The craw-fish departs. The miller by and by wakes up, and starts his mill, and away goes the wheel, making music to his ear. The craw-fish goes to the dam above. He is not much. The river is a thousand times mightier than he; and so is the massive dam. But he commences to bore into the clay. He keeps boring, and boring, and boring, till by and by he has made a tunnel clear through to the other side of the bank. And first one drop comes through: and then another; and then another; and each drop takes a little dirt with it. Gradually the hole grows larger and larger. This goes on all day and all night; and at length the channel is so worn that a considerable stream runs through it. And at last that stream becomes a freshet, and gains a force and impetus such that it carries everything with it. And away go the abutments and timbers of the dam; and away goes the miller's mill; and away goes his house upon the bank; and the trees and all things are whelmed in the flood!

Now which is the stronger, the crawfish or the miller and his dam? The crawfish is a little thing; it was a small hole that he made; but ah! it was what it led to that determines its importance. The craw-fish was big enough for a beginning; and there were other causes behind him that led to still other causes; so that by and by what an engineer could scarcely have done was done by this little boring craw-fish. Whether a thing be a trifle or not, depends upon its power to prepare the way for another thing; and upon the power of that thing to prepare for yet another thing; and so on. It depends upon whether it is the first of a train or series, and draws consequences after it. There are thousands of things which when you consider them simply in their own light seem very insignificant, but which when you consider them in relation to after causes become of transcendent value. It will never do to call things little till you see what they can do.

A little thing, or that which men call little, may be very trifling indeed for one purpose, and in one direction; and yet, for another purpose, and in another direction, it may be extremely potent.

The captain of a ship wishes to spread his sails, and go out of the harbor, and there is the merest puff of wind—only just enough to flare a candle. It is an insignificant thing, and a man has to wet his hand and hold it up to know which way it comes from. And the captain will never raise an anchor for that. He says, "Pshaw! it is but a breath." It is of no use as a motive power at all; and yet, if

just that is coming through a broken pane of glass upon an invalid it is tremendously powerful.

My mother went out, after a sickness, to the old brown school-house in Litchfield, and sat down and listened to an evening lecture; and behind her, in one of the rude windows of six by eight glass, a pane was broken. The absence of that pane there was very little, so far as its damage to the whole school-house was concerned; but there came through it one of those evening draughts or breaths of air, which was good for nothing for moving a ship, and fell upon her neck, and chilled her, and struck to her heart; and in less than three months she died. To a sailor it was very little; but to her it was very great.

That which in certain conditions of mind is of no consequence, in other conditions of mind may become omnipotent. That which in certain states of mind may have very little or no influence, one way or another, in critical circumstances may have the power of final determination, and may carry in it God's decree for good or for evil.

Let us apply these familiar illustrations.

In forming character, little things go a great way, both by the power of aggregation, of which I have spoken, and because they have critical relations to mind and temperament, to times and seasons. For all the three reasons which I have alleged, little things have great power in determining character, when men are forming their characters. It is but a very small thing for a man to jest at sacred things. The vanity of wit may lead a young man to quote Scripture at the expense of reverence for Scripture. And if he is rebuked he may say, "It is a great pother that you make about a little thing." In one way it amounts to a little; but in another way it amounts to a great deal. Because, when you have begun to take off the enamel from the back of a mirror, every particle that you scrape off, every scratch that you make, mars the image that the mirror reflects. And every time you trifle with reverent or sacred things, it is as though you scratched a mirror; and afterward every image that you see when you look at those things is marred. An irreverent jest is a little thing; but its influence on the moral sense, and upon veneration, is a great thing, because it leads to another thing which is still worse, and another thing which is worse than that, until by and by the power of invisible and venerable things on the soul is well-nigh destroyed.

It is a very little thing when one falls into the habit of salacious wit and narrative. A man may scorn the imputation of impure morals, although his tongue is not clean, and call it an external fault; and yet, when men are forming character, and indulging themselves in conversation that soils delicacy and purity, and fills the mind with

associations that had better have been left out, they take down the barriers. The influences of sensitiveness and delicacy are a barrier which God puts between good and bad, to keep men from the bad; and although a man may be indelicate, and not go over, yet the barriers are taken away, and it will be easier for him to go over. And if he is saved, it will be by the grace of God. It is a little thing, to be sure; but it is one of those little things that have a long end.

It is a small matter for one to indulge himself in petty things; little pleasures; little self-indulgences, each one of which is infinitesimal, it may be; but the habit which is formed in that respect makes little things, no one of which seems to be of any account, to be of very great account.

Now, there are many men who would not blaspheme—oh, no! but they would use cowards' oaths. When a man wants to say, "By Jehovah!" he says, "By Jupiter!" When a man wants to say, "Damn it!" he says, "Darn it!" When a man wants to say, "I swear!" he says, "I swow!" When a man wants to be profane, he does not dare to be profane, and take the comfort of it, and so he resorts to such modified expressions as these.

Now, to rebuke a man who says, "By George," and, "By thunder," as being profane, seems to be unreasonable. I should not make it a capital offence; I should not say that a man who fell into these ways of speaking was unprincipled; but I would say to every young man and maiden—for I think that sometimes maidens need exhortation on this subject—that these little speeches lead to intemperate speeches, which by and by lead to more audacious oaths. I would say that they have a tendency in the wrong direction.

"Let your communication be yea, yea, or nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

So said the Master; and I think he knew.

There are a great many persons who are thoroughly of the opinion that black lies are wicked; but of white lies they have a better opinion. Now, what is a white lie? Well, you cannot give any definition of it except that it is a small lie? What is a small lie? Well, it is an untruth in some trivial matter. And, in so far as the consequences are concerned, it may be trivial; as, for instance, where you deceive a child, and he forgets it, and you forget it. A white lie is a deception, like that of telling a person that you have not been where you have been, when he has no business to know anything about it.

When Walter Scott was writing one of his novels, and he did not wish it known that he was the author of it, and a man said to him, "Are you the author of that novel?" he said, "No, I am not." And in his own letters, in his life, he makes the distinct statement that he had a right to deny what other people had no business to know. That

was the moral ground which he took. Is not that a tenable ground? I do not ask whether persons' weaknesses may not sometimes throw them upon such a ground. I do not ask whether you would not do the same thing under the same circumstances. I take the ground that if a man indulges in a falsehood in a great thing, he will in a little; and that if he does it in a little thing, he is easily led to do it in a great. I am not asking whether men would not do so and so. Very likely I would. But that would not make it any better. The question is, Is it right? Is it safe? Is it honorable? Is it consistent with the Christian idea of character? I say that little lies are not as dangerous as lions. Neither are little vermin. And yet, a man had better have his head clean and his skin clean.

Men think frequently that little thefts constitute a subdivision of guilt. They do not believe in allopathic stealing; but they do in homeopathic. I hold to the homeopathic theory, which teaches that the power of medicine is not in proportion to its largeness or smallness—that there is just as much power in one of these pilules as there is in the old bolus. And, so far as moral quality is concerned, a man that steals a pin, *steals*.. It may not hurt the merchant so much, but it hurts you just as much—more sometimes, because it is more insidious; because it does not affect your conscience; because it leads you to do other things, step by step, obliterating that sensibility which is a warning and a guard. Great crimes, begun early, would shock men and hold them back; and little thefts are the nits which hatch out into great ones. No man who means well by himself should ever permit himself to color the truth, or to tell the smallest falsehood. If he does, let him not own to himself that he has not sinned. No man who means well by himself should indulge in the lightest-fingered thieving —in taking the smallest particle which does not belong to him. It is better to be honest and true in the inward man, clear down to the bottom of motive and interest. Do that, and you are safe. But if you indulge in little things that are wrong, you do not know where those little things will carry you.

So I might go on to prove that it is true of vices generally, that small ones become large ones. And yet, inducing these greater dangers, they soothe a man's fear; they conciliate his conscience, and bribe it; they take away all the instincts of apprehension. Men grow bad faster when they commit a shoal and multitude of little sins, of various kinds.

Considered in the light of moral aggregation, I remark again, single actions may be insignificant, and yet, by repetition may become well-nigh omnipotent. There is nothing, I suppose, that is more feeble than a single strand of a spider's web. I read an account, only

a few days ago, of a man who saw a very curious spectacle—that of a black snake more than a foot long suspended in the air in a perfect sack of spider's web. And the spider was not a large one. It was one of these small spiders. It bore no proportion to its victim. Nor could he by any biting hurt him. But there he had him imprisoned. He had drawn him, little by little, into the air; and the snake could not help himself. Probably the serpent was torpid; or the enemy was so small that he did not know that he was upon him. And the spider spun out of his bowel a little film, not a third part as large as the smallest silk thread that a woman uses withal; and he dipped down and touched the snake with it, and it stuck. He took another little film, and touched him with that, and it stuck. He went on industriously; and as the snake lay quiet, he put another and another film upon him. And as there was time enough, he added another and another, till there were a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand of them. And by and by these little weak strands, no one of which was strong enough to hold a gnat, when multiplied became strong enough to encase the victim. A million times stronger the snake was than that miserable little spider, and yet the spider caught him, he webbed him round and round, until when he tried to move he was held fast. That web had grown strong out of its weakness. By putting one strand here, and another there, and drawing on this, that and the other, the spider at last lifted the burden, and it hung suspended in the air.

I have seen men webbed by offences in that same way; and no one of the offences was much larger than the film of a spider's web; and at last they were imprisoned and destroyed. Where men are coming to any great crisis, for instance, in their lives, how very strong little things are; as, sometimes, when they are balancing in their minds whether they will give up drinking courses or not! Men have been in bad company, and have been indulging in all manner of wickedness. God leads them through some dark way or other, and gives them a shock; or, through some gradual work on the soul, he leads them more and more to sobriety and thoughtfulness; and they are coming to that point in which they are to decide whether they shall or shall not change their lives.

Three men sent for Mr. Morton, the missionary of the Bethel, to go and see them; and he appointed a time for meeting them; and when he met them, they said to him, "We have been drinking men; and we have all of us been in your class; and we have come to the conclusion that we have been drinking too much. We have been leaving off little by little; and now we have come to the conclusion that it is best for us to leave off entirely. And we have asked you to come in and have us sign the pledge, and shake hands with us."

So the pledge was signed, and they shook hands all round. And then they said, after a moment's hesitation, "We feel as though this was not enough. We feel as though if there is anything in religion, it was time that we had it. And we have asked you to come that you might tell us how to get it."

Now, there was a time in those men's lives when they did not break out in that full-blossomed way. There was a time of struggle, of hesitation, in which the motives on the one side and the other were almost balanced. There was a time, probably, at which, if some old boon companion, some big-hearted man, whose blood ran through him like a gulf-stream, and generated a great deal of magnetism, and carried folks away with him, had met these men, they would have been swept from their moorings, and would have fallen back upon their old ways, and there would have been no pledge, and no religion, and no salvation in the heavenly land, for them. There was a time when, coming to New York, a slight thing might have determined your everlasting destiny. For, when things are nearly balanced, it takes but little to turn them.

Here, in one scale, is half a ton. The weigher goes to work and throws into the other scale a hundred pounds, and another hundred pounds, and another hundred, till there are five, six, seven, eight, nine hundred pounds there; and then he throws in fifty pounds more, and twenty-five more, and twenty more, and one more, and three more, and half a pound more, and a quarter of a pound more, and a quarter more. And then up goes the other scale; and they are just at equipoise. Now, throw one ounce into one scale, and down it will go. In the beginning five hundred pounds did not start it; but when a scale is at equipoise one ounce will make it kick.

So it is when men are brought to the decision to go forward in a right way; to forsake a bad course; to lift themselves up to a higher sphere of life; to live for spiritual good and not for fleshly good; to live for the life that is to come, as well as for the life that now is. In these fearful moments of decision, the drinking of a cup of liquor, which at another time, though not prudent, might not have proved disastrous, will sweep away that sensibility which is the last ground of hope that remains, and destroy the soul. It is a perilous thing, in such an hour as that, for a man to throw himself where pleasures may entice, where indulgences may solicit, where anything may come in to unsettle his purpose. It takes very little to carry down the scale when it stands at equipoise. Very often the least thing will do it.

I say this, because I have been for so long a time dealing with men that I know what their feelings are, and I know that such warning is often needed when men are serious-minded; when they are very near

to the kingdom of God—as near as some of you are to-night—so near that it would take the merest pressure of the hand to bear them over the line, and within the sacred precinct. Men ridicule us, sometimes, who do not well consider what they say, and who do not understand the nature of moral qualities, when we say to a man, "Withhold yourself even from lawful pleasures; do not go into company which at other times you might properly keep; God's Spirit strives with you; your heart is brought into such a temper, and under such influences, that that which would be perfectly allowable at another time is not wise at this crisis." As, when a person is sick, diet which in health is perfectly right is bad for him; so, when a man is coming back to himself and to his Saviour, there are many things which he ought not to do, because in such critical hours and moments little things go so far.

When guides are taking men along Alpine stretches, in the forenoon, when the sun has begun to shine, and the vast avalanches lie above, they will not let them speak, and say to them, as they begin to make the turn, "While going round this ravine on the narrow path let no man say a word." And so they go in silence, one after another. Why? Because so exactly balanced, sometimes, is the avalanche, that the echo, and the vibration of the air which is produced, will be just what is necessary to break the last icicle that holds it; and down will come the avalanche. At other points in the passage they may shout as loud as they please, and it will do no harm; but there are critical points where the guide says, "Hush, and do not even whisper." It is a very little thing; but oh! does it not take hold of tremendous consequences?

A companion that is good for hours of health, may be a bad companion for hours of sickness. A companion that is good for ordinary times, may, at certain critical times of a man's moral history, be ruinous, not intending it. Thousands of men have been destroyed in this world, I doubt not, who never knew, nor suspected even, that it was the smallest circumstance that determined their destruction. As trains are destroyed by the movement of a switch no more than the tenth part of an inch, so little things often determine, at critical periods, men's fate for time and for eternity.

Are there not persons here, to-night, who are about to plunge to-morrow into the world again? Are there not persons here whose hearts have been brought to some degree of glow, and who have in them yearnings and aspirations? It may be that some great trouble has brought you to this. It may be that some revelation of God's truth has been made known to you. If you nourish it, if you shield it, it will be kindled into a blaze of grace that shall one day mingle with the celestial fire. If you neglect it, if you suffer the rude wind to blow upon it, it may

be extinguished, and the light may never again be kindled in your heart and conscience.

A band of hunters, going out, toil all day with little success, and are, by the rain and sleet which pelts upon them, driven into the woods, where they are overtaken by the night, and are lost. They cannot extricate themselves, and they will perish if they cannot kindle a fire. They search, and there is but a single match left. Their whole safety depends upon that. If they can strike that, and thereby ignite sticks of wood, they will survive; but if not, they may die before morning. They hold counsel. They seek the shady side of a tree. They hunt for dry bits of moss. They get slivers of the dryest wood. They gather together the best material within their reach, and put it where neither the wind nor the rain can find it. The match must not be lost, and one of them slips his boot off from his foot. The wind is up, and sweeps past them; and no hat, nor sheltering tree can protect that match. So, far down in the cavern of the boot he scrapes it on the soul. And, blessed be God! it takes fire. They cannot bring it out. It is a very little thing. But oh! it is life or death to these men. If it goes out they are gone; and if it is kept they are saved. Fortunately the moss catches, and the wood begins to burn—first one little bit, and then another little bit, and then another, until by and by the blazing moss may be brought out. And then the wind rather helps it, if it is not too strong. And at last the large pieces of wood are kindled, and there is a glorious fire, and the wind that now is permitted to blow full upon it is God's bellows to bring up the life-giving element. And the large mass crackles and blazes. And they are safe. They can now put on what they have a mind to, and the wind may blow as hard as it pleases, but they are safe. There was, however, a point where they were in jeopardy.

There is many and many a man who may by and by be perfectly hardy in exposure, and in the indulgence of lawful things; but there are critical times in these men's histories—in their household histories; in their business histories; in their conscience life and their spiritual life. There are times when the flickering flame of their hope is liable to be extinguished. And that is the meaning of the word of God when it is said that Christ is one who *will not break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax, until he shall bring forth judgment unto victory.* He will not put out the spark that is kindling the wick of hope in any soul, until he consummates the work of grace in that soul.

Finally—not to draw these illustrations out unduly, and weary you—am I extravagant when I warn you, young men, and men of life and business? Do I overdraw the picture, or exaggerate it, when I bid you beware of little sins of every kind? A serpent's tooth is small,

and a scorpion's sting is small; but they carry death. And little sins are small; but many and many a man has lain down in final anguish because they stung him to death. Beware of all sins. Beware of little sins especially.

And do I exaggerate when I tell you that in the critical passages of your life you cannot afford to do things which you would fain do? O serious-minded man! O woman, on whose heart God has laid affliction, and whom he has called to fulfill long-delayed vows! O father of a family, that has no exemplar, on whose judgment and on whose conscience has rested for a long time the unfulfilled duties of religious life! have you not been brought again and again to the point, almost, of decision, and fallen away from it, until it has become harder and harder every year for you to get your own attention, or bring yourself to the point of a resolution? Neither can you describe nor tell me what it was that balked the decision. You cannot tell why it was, when you came so near to the kingdom of God, that you did not enter in. It was because of some little thing, so inconspicuous that you did not yourself recognize what it was, and yet mighty enough to destroy your moral purpose, mighty enough to carry you thus far down the way of life again, in old habits, old selfishness, old pride, old worldliness, disobeying God, forfeiting your own hope, and preparing the way for your own destruction. And now the time comes round again. I know that there are children of Christian parents here who never can hear the truth preached faithfully, that their hearts do not sound out like the soldier's drum. The "long roll" they hear; and their fears start up on every side. There are such men here to-night. There are men here who have scarcely eased themselves of the burden of an old sorrow. There are men here to whom I can say, very truthfully, "You are not far from the kingdom of God. You are convinced in your judgment and in your consciences; and your hearts are touched; and you are very near to the point of deciding. A little thing will do it. There are some men here who, I think, if they would, when they go home to-night, gather their wife and children about them and say to them, "Help me; for from this time forth I am going to try to live a Christian life," would find that it would strike the balance the right way; and they would be saved. But if they neglect it, the balance will go the other way, and they will be destroyed. I believe there are men here who, if they would make one vehement effort to break up a bad habit, would thus take the first of a series of steps which would bring them into a spiritual change.

I do not say that a man who uses tobacco is a great sinner. I would not take extravagant ground on that subject. But I would take the ground that this is one of the bad habits that it is hard to break off from; and therefore I say that a man who would make up his mind to

cast that out, would find that this strain of his nerve for the sake of a moral result, though it was a little thing, would be a very decisive thing. I have known many a man who had taken a single step in reform, and who, if he had had the strength of purpose to take another step would have been carried along and saved, but who, for the want of that strength of purpose, was destroyed. If men are wise, when they have taken the first step in the right direction they will not stop till they have taken the second, and many more.

I believe there are men here to-night who, if they would say to their companions, "Give me your hand; I will not drink another drop again," would be saved from the drunkard's grave. You are going to destruction along the way of intemperance. You know it, though you deny it. And your friends know it, though they do not tell you so; and if you would say to those who know you, "Before God I declare that from this time I will be clean in this matter," it would be the means of your salvation. That small thing is not religion; but it is the first step toward it; and you will take another, and another, and another, until they bring you into the kingdom of God.

There are men here who have not bent the knee in prayer for years and years, and who, if they would go home and bend the knee before they sleep, and pray to God for help, would be taking a decisive step in the right direction in their history. Why? Because praying saves a man? Oh no. It is not because there is a charm in that thing. It is a little thing, to be sure; but it is one of those small acts which are likely to carry you forward to the next step, and the next, in the work of your salvation.

There are many men in my hearing to-night who are so near to a right life, who are so convinced that they have been going wrong, who are so desirous of mending their lives, and whose sympathies, and companionships, and hopes, and better judgment, and aspirations so set in that way, that if they would take the least step seriously with the purpose of making it the first step of a series, it would be to them a parting from sin and the kingdom of darkness, and an approaching to righteousness and the kingdom of light and glory.

Now, I beseech you, look upon this thing to-night. I speak to you as to my brethren. Heed what I say, not from my profession, but from my personal sympathy with you, a citizen among citizens, having no right to give you advice except that right which comes from love. Your salvation is your concern personally. Ponder what I have said. Consider whether it is not good sense, and whether it has not experience under it. Take heed to it.

Are there not some here who will go to their rooms to-night better and soberer? Young men, wake up. Break off from your sin? It

is but a moment's pleasure, and it is endless damnation! O maiden called of God! let not that spark which has been kindled be put out by the unruly wind or the scowling storm. Listen to your mother's God that calls you. O father! O mother! let your children have some one to guide them through the dark way in this world. O friends and neighbors! take hold of hands, and part from Satan, and from all his wiles. And lift up your eyes. Your salvation draweth nigh. It lingereth not. It shall come. And God shall save you with an everlasting salvation.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Vouchsafe to us, our Heavenly Father, the Divine illumination. Grant to us more light. Grant us thine influence. Breathe upon us, that we may have power both to conceive all things that are right and noble, and to do the same. For in thee we live and move and have our being. Though we cannot discern thee; though we may not have such commerce with thee as we have with one another; though thou art a Spirit, and we are in the body; though we cannot with these dull instruments of the flesh discern spiritual things knowingly; yet thou art, and thou makest thy presence felt, and thou dost fill the hearts of those that believe on and trust thee with great joy. And in the communications of thy grace there are hours of blessed certainty and hours of revelation. Thou dost lift up thy people upon the mountain-top. Then thou art changed, and becomest radiant; and against the sky thou art brighter than any star that is in it.

O Lord! we thank thee for even these hours of transfiguration; and if in them we forget the duties of life, and fain would make tabernacles to abide in sweet experiences, below us are all the miseries of mankind, and we come down again, better, stronger, truer, more faithful, and pursue afterward, in the lower ways of life, our duties with more alacrity, for the high and blessed privileges which we have enjoyed.

Grant unto every one of thy children, as thou seest that they need, these intimations and revelations of thyself. If there be those who do not know how to trust thee, if there be those whose faith is very weak, if there be those that believe, and yet cry out, "Help my unbelief," Lord be very gracious unto such. And if they cannot walk alone, bear them in thine arms, thou Shepherd that dost carry the lambs. According to their weakness and their want let thy mercies abound unto them. Be gracious to all who would draw near thee with humble confession. We know their weakness. We know the strength of their wickedness. We know how defective they are in things that are right. We know how powerful in them are tendencies to evil. O Lord! we pray that thou wilt hear the cry of such souls. They do not desire captivity. They do not desire to be led astray by the strength of their passions. And though at times all their passions are as the mountains full of the Philistines, and their better resolutions are as thy people beaten small in the valleys, yet they cry unto thee, and thou dost overthrow their adversaries. If to-night they ask for Divine help against their own pride and worldliness, Lord, turn not away thine ear from their petition. If there are those who wish to make their way toward virtue, or to progress in anything pertaining to the true life of Christ, we beseech of thee that thou wilt reveal thyself to

them. If there is but a spark, thou art He that will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax, until thou dost bring forth judgment unto victory. Be with those that need thee by reason of the greatness of their sin and their wickedness. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt draw near to all those that are cast down through despondency or remorse; to all those that wish they were dead, and yet dare not die; to all those that go forth into life seeing no glory in it.

How many there are who have been swept away and snared! How many there are who find their way in life so steep that they cannot climb it. Oh Lord! save them from discouragement; and grant that they may not slip backward toward perdition. May they hear the voice of hope crying unto them—the voice of God—saying, "Come up hither." May there be many to-night that shall lift their weary hands, that shall gird up their loins and enter upon the battle of life contesting evil, running from the mistakes of their past life, showing their sincerity in repentance of sin by a better walk, by forsaking that which is wrong, and by endeavoring to strengthen others in the respects in which thou dost strengthen them. We pray that thou wilt teach us to be more gentle and merciful. May we take our lessons, not from one another, but from Him in whom alone we hope for redemption. Grant that the sense of life's shortness may throw itself upon us, not to daunt us nor discourage us, but to put away untimely levity, and give us more earnestness, and make us do what our hands find to do, remembering that the night cometh fast in which we can do no more work.

Wilt thou grant thy blessing to rest upon all that are in thy presence as they severally need. And we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to all thy churches; to thy ministering servants; to all that preach the Gospel. Wilt thou comfort and strengthen them, and grant that they may see as the result of their labor a great harvest. Fulfill thy promises to all the earth. Cause wars to cease. Cause injustice and those oppressions which breed war to cease. May ignorance which tempts oppressors, itself be enlightened. May superstition, and all the mischiefs of depravity cease in all the earth. And may that blessed day of prediction come, when Christ shall reign a thousand years.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word of truth which we have spoken. Grant that it may be blessed to many souls. Awaken thoughtfulness; awaken desire; awaken conscience; awaken fear. May all our feelings strive with us. For how great is the darkness around us! How great is the current, and how strong the pressure toward things selfish, and carnal, and worldly! Without thy spirit we can do nothing. We need its light; we need its warmth; we need its encouragement. We need, O Lord God! that thou shouldst work in us to will and to do of thine own good pleasure. Thou art working. Blessed be God, thou dost not measure thy mercies by our desert. But how many art thou calling who do not deserve such mercies as thou art desirous of bestowing upon them! How many that are in thy presence have thrown away thy bounties in times past, and sinned against light and knowledge! And yet thou art come again. Before how many hearts dost thou stand to-night, knocking? To how many art thou saying, Open, and let me come in. My locks are wet with the dews of the night. O God of pious

mothers and sainted fathers! look upon the children that are left behind them, and have mercy upon them. O Lord God! join again in more blessed wedlock those who stand severed, loving each other with earthly love, but having no common hope in heaven above. O Lord God! look upon the young, and see how they are spoiled, how they are as sheep for the shambles, in this devouring city. Oh! have mercy upon them. And grant that to-night, by thy grace, many of them may be called, and that they may heed the call of God, and come to newness of life. Let thy work be revived. Pour out thy Spirit mightily in the hearts of thy people. And in all thy churches may we hear of multitudes awakened, and multitudes converted.

And to the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN.

"And ye, fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."—EPH. VI., 4.

The Sunday for the baptism of children is a fit occasion for the instruction of parents who are bringing up children. It is true that no one can give such directions as shall insure success in the rearing of our children, or in relieving the parent from finding out his own way. When the most has been said, and the best modes have been given, each parent must, after all, make his own experience. There is much that must be left to discretion; much that will scarcely be the same to any two; but some general considerations may greatly help and comfort parents in their work. Some principles may be laid down which, being observed, will help, not only in the government of children, but in governing ourselves, and in governing, or rather, in *managing*, as the phrase is, those with whom we are obliged to transact the affairs of life.

That is a joyful hour in a household when a child is born to the young parents. They must be very worldly, and devoid of sensibility, who do not feel some awe over the new cradle. The mystery of human life comes very near, and never seems more wonderful than at the beginning of life. Perhaps not the little coffin itself is more affecting to one of deep and inward thought than is the cradle. While the child is yet a babe, the parents may have more care, but not so much anxiety, as when it is growing up, and begins to need training. At that time not a few, conscientious and earnest, feel themselves utterly helpless. And if they be cast far away from their parents, as often in this changing land they are, they reach out feeble hands of imploration, and long for some one to give them the clue, or lay down for them some principle, which embracing, they may apply from time to time in the rearing of their households.

I leave to physicians the questions of physical culture; not because they are unimportant in a moral point of view, but because only a section of this great subject can be discussed in any one discourse.

SUNDAY MORNING, Nov. 13, 1870. LESSON: MATTHEW XVIII., 1-10. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 286, 925, 927.

1. It is the more needful to give instruction, because the theory and the practice of family government have very much changed within a generation. The old English rigor of parental authority—that almost despotic government which parents still exercise in Germany—has not been known among us, even from an early day. I think the family opened toward liberty more in America than in the old land, where the Roman spirit and tradition prevailed. But even the strictness of New England has been greatly relaxed—and I think not to the damage of the household. It may be that the government which prevails in one period of time has such relations to public sentiment, and to manners and to customs, that it is better for that period than any later government would be; but I think that the milder type of family government which is prevailing now is certainly better for us than that more rigorous type which prevailed in New England. The prevalent sense of personal liberty, which has increased in the community at large, has penetrated the family and ameliorated its government. Children are freer. They earlier assume their own rights. They are not less loving, but they are certainly less reverential. Reverence, I may remark, has found a very poor soil and climate in America. It grows most scrubby. Children are, I think, taking the whole community together, better reared than they used to be. It will not do to select single instances in making a judgment of what is wisest and best. We must average the community. And if you take high and low, I think there is a greater number of families advanced higher in the care and development and training of their children, than at any former period, although the methods are very different. The schools, the social customs, the political ideas, the public sentiment at large, above all, the religious temper and genius of any age, will largely influence the family life. But the whole routine being broken up, many are perplexed as to what is the wisest course to take. There is so much written, there are so many new-fangled social theories, that a good many persons are sorely disturbed. And I hope to help such.

2. The question is, To whom do the children belong that come into our households? In ancient days there would have been no hesitation on this point. They belonged to the parents. This was the case in the early periods of the Hebrew history. Nowhere, however, was it the case so emphatically, and in such a heathenish form, as in Rome, where the father owned, not simply his wife, but his children, in precisely the same sense that merchandise is owned; where he had not only the power of absolute government, but the power of life and death—limited, to be sure, in later days, in the Roman economy, but lying at the root of it nevertheless. And in Rome, the *patria potestas*, as it was called technically—the father's authority—did not termi-

nate, as with us, at the age of twenty-one. It remained as long as he lived, and no son could be set free from the absolute authority of the father, who owned him and his—all that was his—his wife, his children, and his property. No child was owned by himself. He was owned by his father, as the father was owned by the grandfather—if he still lived. And there was no way for a young man to get rid of the *patria potestas*, except by a legal enactment—for a law was finally enacted that while a father might sell his son, he could never sell him more than three times; or that if he did, the son should go free. And so, when the son came to be of age, the form of sale was gone through with three times by agreement between the father and the son; and after that the son owned himself. But without that transaction, the father owned the son. And I think that if this old Roman notion of ownership in man were traced out through the church, and the civil government, and through our ethical ideas, it would be found to be at the root of much of the reasoning in theology, and much of the reasoning also in civil economies. It was arbitrary and barbarous, first, middle, and last.

The traces of it are found, also, though in a milder form than among the Hebrews, in the writings of the New Testament—not in approbation, but simply as a testimony of fact; where, for instance, in the fourth chapter of Galatians, the Apostle Paul says:

"Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a slave, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father."

Servant is the translation here. This never could be said in our day. We have to modify it, to make it seem true to us. It was true to ancient custom. Absolute ownership was the old notion; and it is not rubbed out yet. For you will find the mediæval spirit in Europe to this day. And although there is not yet such a property sense of ownership as there once was, the right of the father to his children is almost as rigorous in many parts of Continental Europe and in many parts of England, and in some families in America, as if they were absolutely their slaves.

The great contrast began to appear in the Apostle's writings; and you find traces of it in the context of the passage which I have selected. I will read a verse or two of the sixth of the Ephesians:

"Children, obey your parents."

Is that it? No! no!

"Children obey your parents *in the Lord*."

There is a greater ownership than that of your parents. Within that divine circle obey them; but there is limitation. There is the death-blow to the old Roman *patria potestas*.

"Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with

promise) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayst live long on the earth. And ye fathers [here comes in the right of the children] provoke not your children to wrath."

You do not own them. You have no right to do just what you please with them. You are not to goad and irritate them. Your government over them is not arbitrary; and you have no right to assume absolute authority over them.

"Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

In the next two verses Christ's name is interposed in the relation of master and servant.

"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh,"

—not according to the eternal principles of rectitude, but, as it were, by an accident of the flesh.

"Be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart as unto Christ."

Why, what an amazing implication this is! If you can not find a motive in your relation to a man who says he owns you, from which to obey him, then understand that you are obeying Christ Jesus, who stands behind him. Do it for Christ's sake if you can not find any reason to do it for the man's sake.

"Not with eye-service, as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart."

Thus be obedient to them. Here is clearly discerned the greater ownership, leaving us only, as it were, borrowers of rights. Our children are ours on loan, so to speak. They are lent to us, and are to be returned better than when we took them. We do not own them.

It comes then to this—that our children are God's. We are not sovereigns. Our will is not superior. They belong to One that is higher. And if you doubt that this is the spirit of the new dispensation, and pre-eminently of Christ, listen to that passage which I read in your hearing this morning, from the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, where Christ says, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

Much difference of notion has obtained among commentators as to the meaning of this; and in some respects it is difficult. But one thing is certain, Jesus did teach that children had rights in heaven; that God did not think of parents alone; that not men with scepters in their hands, and crowns on their heads, not men of power alone, but children, were known in heaven, and were recognized there before God; and that it was a perilous thing for a man to harm them. Was there ever a greater denunciation of woe than this?

"Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanging about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

We have heard a great deal said, from time to time, about how Christianity has elevated and refined the condition of woman—and too much can not be said on that subject; but not enough had been said to show what the effect of Christianity has been in ameliorating the condition and exalting the relations of children to their parents.

We *bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, then, not for our own pride and profit, not even for the child's own good simply, but for its citizenship in the coming world. And this is to be kept before us as the great end which we are never to lose sight of. That gained, and a man's child may miss everything else, and he has been well brought up; that missed, and if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, he has been wickedly, fatally reared. Our children are God's. Ours are they, only for a specific purpose, which is that we are to nurture them, and educate them, in the fear of the Lord, with reference to their eternal happiness in the heavenly state. How it exalts the miserable vanity which sometimes seems to be the strongest feeling that parents have, how it lifts up ambition, how it intensifies the motives for fidelity and self-sacrifice in us toward our children, that we are working in them for the eternal life, and that every child whom we are tending, or correcting, or nurturing, has an angel, or what is equivalent to that, watching over it! There is an eye and a heart in heaven that is looking after every immortal child on earth. There is not a neglected brat in all the purlieus of vice; there is not an uncombed, unwashed, untaught child that has not some angel heart that is pitying it in the heaven above. Parents may be unfaithful, and neighbors cold and neglectful, but God does not forget the little children that are on earth.

3. What, under the Christian system of educating children, is the relation of family government? What does the family government seek for each child? Well, the end sought is not to govern it. Government is a means to another end, and not anything that is good in itself. To be sure, we govern our children for the sake of the other children; for the sake of our own peace; for the sake of the comfort and joy of the whole household; but these are incidental things. All family government, in the first instance, is for each child's individual good. We govern that we may teach the child to govern itself at the earliest possible period.

When flowers are blossoming, it is not on account of beauty that they put forth their petals; it is not on account of fragrance; it is not that they may be looked at and rejoiced in. Underneath every blossom is either the germ of the fruit, or else the core with the seed; and the whole strife of the plant is, at the earliest possible period, to push for-

ward that seed, so that it shall be prepared to drop, or begin another life of its own,

And in family government, we govern that we may be done governing just as soon as we possibly can. Our object in governing is to teach our children to govern themselves, and, therefore, not to need our government. We are to develop, as soon as it is proper, a free moral agent, competent to think for itself, to choose wisely for itself, and to act independently for itself. The child, therefore, must be treated as an apprentice of human life. He has come into our family as an apprentice into a shop. He has come there to learn how to live. We are master-workmen, and we are to teach him what we know in order that he may learn how to carry on the business of living in this life according to all the conditions which obtain around about him. He knows nothing. He has everything to learn. His mistakes of passion are not therefore depravity. Although when an adult, a man may be depraved, the mere fact that a child goes wrong, feels wrong, does wrong, is not to be set down so much to depravity as to ignorance of how to do anything else. We are not born with the trade of conduct learned. We are born with a mind full of tools, but with the hand not yet trained to use one of them.

We ought not to count the mistakes of the child in early life, then, to be punishable, any more than the mistakes of the hand in learning a trade. There will be sinfulness enough without it; but mere ignorance of self-government is not to be set down as a sin. It is simply an irregularity to be corrected with the tenderest patience. The child does not know how to do better—why should it?

A great many persons shudder when they see passions—various developments of wild nature—in their children. I do not know why one should shudder at it. The more there is of it, the more strength they have. For power comes with the basilar faculties. And a parent is to take heed of these things, and educe these qualities, training the child in them. Then they will not be dangerous.

A child must have time to learn and time to practice. It is impossible for one to learn the complex problem of life under the very best teachers so as to practice aright right along from childhood in the cradle. We must wait for our children a great while before they will know how to do the best things in the best way.

Parents oftentimes are greatly alarmed, and almost cruel, in pursuing the selfishness of the child. But selfishness is natural to the child. The child is by instinct selfish. The lower life of every child is selfishness. And selfishness is to be taught benevolence. But you cannot teach it in a day. Would you be discouraged because your child did not learn to write in an hour? Would you be discouraged

because your child did not learn how to write a flowing and comely hand in months? You wait patiently for the body to learn anything: Why do you not do the same thing when it is the mind? The child does not know any better than to be selfish, because in the order of development the animal nature comes first, and the higher nature afterwards, as I shall show. The child manifests cruelty. It is not because he is necessarily a cruel being. He does not know how to do any better. He has not been taught. The child does not observe truth. Why should he? Everybody has to learn it. It is an artificial state. We are not born knowing how to manage conscience, and to apply the rules of conscience to speech and conduct. It is an artificial result of training. *Bring up your child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* Tell him how to be benevolent; how to be unselfish; how to be humane; how to be truthful. And let him practice these things. If you are teaching your child to take the steps in a dancing-room, you do not fly either into a passion or into a state of terror, because the first time he attempts to take the steps on the floor in the presence of his companions he moves awkwardly. Children *learn* grace, though some with more aptitude than others. Every one learns where to put the feet; and at last it becomes a habit. He learns how to use the hands, which are the most cumbrous and useless things in the world, when first one is brought into company. He never knows where to put them. And the child has to learn this. It is a great thing to learn how to do nothing with your hands when there is nothing to be done. And men are patient in these matters. If it is leaping, if it is a saltatory education, men say, "Teach nature. Wait for the child. Give him a chance."

But the conscientious mother is overwhelmed with grief; and when the husband comes home, she says, "My dear, Charley has told a lie!" Yes, he has. Probably he has told a hundred; and he will tell a hundred more. For telling the truth is like archery; and no boy hits the mark the first time. He does not know how to aim. He has got to learn. And I will assure you it is a great education to learn how to tell the truth. There are a great many people who never learn it all their life long.

And the child is not to be either violently punished nor suspected, though he steal; though he rob; though he be caught in dirty and bestial tricks. Why, we were born of the dust, and the dirt sticks to us, in a large measure, a good ways up. And children beginning as they do, and where they do, it is not the less necessary that they should be drilled. It is all the more necessary. But it throws a light upon the task of the parents. You are not to think that you have another Nero in your cradle, you are not to think that you have another Cata-

line, because the lower animal nature of the child is most developed, and because evils are breaking out in him all the time. God says to you, "Bring up the child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord:" and you must teach him and train him. Nurture, *nurture*, NURTURE him out of these animal tendencies, into manly tendencies. And if you bring faith and patience to the work, you will certainly have success.

These are the lessons to be learned; these are the life-problems; these are the qualities which may differ in each child; and they are to be *learned*—not inherited. I suppose that inheritance has a great deal to do with it; I suppose hereditary tendencies go on. It is the promise that to those who keep His commandments, God will be gracious to the third and fourth generations. This is the law of hereditary descent. If a man is educated, his child will take on education easier, because his father transmitted the tendency to him. And that tendency will go on increasing. If a man is conscientious, within certain bounds, his child will be more naturally conscientious than if there had not been this hereditary tendency. The father's nature is transmitted to the child. A tendency to goodness in the parent begets a tendency to goodness in the offspring.

Therefore, some children will be more tempted to passion than others. Every child receives something from his parents; so that some children require far less instruction than others. But all children, however constituted, require to be taught how to perform the commonest moral duty. You must not think that you are going to have saints born to you. You have nothing but the raw material. You must spin it, and weave it, and cut it out, and make it into the garment of the saints.

4. A child, in order to learn how to govern itself, must be indulged in self-government—a thing which hardly ever occurs to parents. We always drive a horse with bits in his mouth; and parents seem to think that that is the way to drive children—to always keep bits in their mouth. But a horse never learns much; though some steeds become intelligent enough to be driven without the bit. Yet how many parents set out to be so conscientious and so thorough in their moral government, that they drive their children to death; that their children come out from under their hands, spoiled!

"Well," a parent says, "one thing is certain: my child has turned out bad; but you cannot charge it to me. I rose early and sat up late; and if I did not govern that child, there never was a child governed in this world." Yes, that is the very mischief of it. You ruined the child by governing it so that it did not learn to govern itself. Your business is not to govern your children, but to teach them self-government. And just as soon as you can commute authority in your-

self into automatic or voluntary action in the child, just so soon government ceases, and the child is to be permitted to govern itself.

A man winds up a watch, holding it still; and the watch does not stir; and again he winds, and winds, and winds; and when he stops again it does not go; and he insists upon it that he will make that watch go; and he keeps on winding it; and he breaks it. But after you have wound a watch up a certain way, if you turn it a little, it goes itself after that, if it is good for anything. And a child must not be wound up too much. Not that all peremptory obedience is to be foregone; for in many things life and health require absolutism for a limited time. But all government, mild or strict, should be aiming all the time at the child's enfranchisement; at the child's self-government. That should be the genius of your government. It is better for your child to do things poorly, it is better for your child to do very imperfect things, if thereby he is learning, than that he should do things well, if he is only following a copy. Put the child upon his own judgment. Insist upon it that he shall select, that he shall choose, that he shall find out how to do, how to act, how to live. Leave him to act in many things for himself. He will not act as well, perhaps, as if you had told him what to do; but as a part of the process by which he is learning, he will be a great deal more advantaged by this than if you told him what to do. Children are frequently instructed too much. They are overtaught.

A mistake made in the way toward self-government is often more salutary than imitative correctness. Put a pencil in a child's hand, and put a rose before him, saying to him, "Copy that rose." He would take his compasses, and measure it; but say to him, "Copy the rose out of your own eye, and out of your own hand." And he takes a piece of paper and draws it the best that he can. And when you come to look at it, it is a very poor copy. Now take a *theorem*, as it is called—a rose that has been cut in outline, through a piece of pasteboard—and tell the child to take some water-color, and "rub in" that rose—to paint it. He does paint it. And when it is finished it looks almost like the real rose. But which does a child the most good, making a rose by a theorem, or making it without any copy except the thing itself, where he is obliged to study the relation of petal to petal, and the relation of flower to stem, and the whole with reference to light and shadow? The latter, evidently. He will make poor work at first; but it will educate him. And as he tries, he will come a little nearer and a little nearer yet. And although he may not make the rose, the rose will make him—an artist.

And so it may be in household life, and so it often is in the incipient stages of business life, that the second best is better than the first

best. That is to say, a child that is learning to do a thing of his own judgment and free-will, is profitted ten, twenty, fifty per cent. more than if he were told how to do it. The great thing is to teach a child how to do what he does, relying upon himself.

Trust your children then, as soon as it is safe. Let them, as far as possible, do the things which seem to them best. Then, afterward, point out where they could have done better. Then let them try again untrammeled. And then come in again with kindly criticism. So little by little make them self-reliant, independent in judgment, competent to manage the affairs that are around them.

This course will not avoid all evil. Neither will any course. We all pass toward perfection through infinite mistakes; and our children will not be better than we were. No course will be in a hurry. None will be perfect. All are relative. And this state of things will be more likely to bring in the end a noble and a safe character than any other.

This must extend itself far beyond what Christian parents often think. It is far better that your children should be taught to select their own pleasures, and their own enterprises, than that they should be arbitrarily and absolutely limited by your better judgment.

Of course this has its limitations. It must not be carried too far. I should not choose to have a child of mine run into absolute vice, or into crime, in order that it might learn. Within due bounds and moderation, however, it is better that the child should be permitted to judge about social pleasures, and ten thousand attractive things in life that children must needs be trained toward. There must be a divided course. Though you put metes and bounds, and will not permit certain things; yet within those metes and bounds let them exercise their judgment, and let your children do some things that you would not prefer them to do, in order that they may have the education of selection. There are vigorous exercises, field sports, daring efforts and attempts, that boys wish to engage in; and it is better that they should be allowed to have their way even at the expense of a good tumble, than that they should always be told just what to do, just where to begin, and just where to stop. You tell your children too much.

So in regard to company, instruct the children. Rouse up in them principles of honor. To be parceling out this family, and saying, "You must not associate with those bad boys;" to be selecting that class and circle, and incessantly forbidding the children from going into them; to have your children swell with desire; to have your children at home bubbling as a boiling tea-kettle does, and whining as it does—that is not wholesome. Sometimes it may be the least of two

evils; but as a general thing it is far better that you should begin beforehand, and educate the child to some sense of taste, to some sense of propriety, to some sense of character; and then say to him, "My child, you are coming into such and such circumstances. I want you to exercise your judgment. I appeal to your conscience."

A gentleman in this city told me that his mother, after he had come to be ten years old, almost never forbade him anything; but that he almost never did anything without asking her; and that her reply to him almost invariably was, "My son, think about it; and if you can reconcile it to your own conscience and your honor, I shall not say a word. Do it if you think it is best." She abhorred tobacco; and he wanted to smoke—for that devil gets into boys when they do not know whether they are boys or men, almost invariably. And he came to her on one occasion to ask her if she had any objection to his learning how to smoke. It was like gall to her; but she said to him, "My son, I shall not say anything about it. Go and think it over, and make up your mind. If you can reconcile it to your own moral sense, do it. You must act as you think best." It was better a thousand times than a No. You may say No, and it will soon lose its effect; but when a man says No, himself, it does some good. He wears it a good deal jauntier and easier under such circumstances than when his mother says No. And that which we want more than anything else, is to teach the child discrimination, moral selection, fortitude to deny what he wants to do. And we want to bring the child to that pass in which, when things glitter and are most tempting, he shall have something in him which says, "I will not." The boy or girl is very nearly brought up well that can say that. But there are multitudes of children that are brought up who cannot say it, and who, therefore, are not well brought up.

I would not advocate the pressing of this trust too far, or too indiscriminately. That is to say, children sometimes come into life that are feeble, and that must be carried as children all their days. Therefore, there are those who probably can be advanced but a little way in self-government; and we must not sacrifice them to a theory. Yet, the general principle is a correct one, with such limitations as a discreet observation will itself teach you.

The reason why so many children turn out well who seem to have been neglected is now very plain; though people generally marvel how it is. Here is a neglected neighborhood, and most of the boys have turned out honest and industrious, and are making a good living; and here are people who have been brought up in meeting, and meeting, and meeting, with nothing but catechism, and catechism, and have had none but good books, and only good boys to go with; and see what

has become of them. "One man sent his boy to college, and he broke down a drunkard before he got through the freshman year. He attempted four or five times to reform, but failed; and now he is a vagabond, and has gone nobody knows where. And that is what is called bringing up children!" But stop, let us look at this case a little, and see what is in it. Take a boy. He may not have been sent to school, perhaps, but he may have had a sensible mother. And though he may not have had an eminent and talented father, yet, he may have had a father who, though poor and not educated, was honest and industrious. He may not have been perverted by his parents, in other words. But having had a reasonable endowment of health and mental organization, he was left to take care of himself, under circumstances that did not happen to overmatch his own prudence and his own fortitude. The child was not educated; but he was taught from the beginning of his life to govern himself. He learned, when he was a little boy, to think for himself, and say where he would go, and where he would not go. He did not become prematurely smart; but he was fortunate in his temperament and his associations; and when he had grown up into life he had learned one thing (and there is nothing more important to learn) —self-government. He had learned to take care of himself.

On the other hand, here is a mother who is most profoundly religious and conscientious. Why, she would die for her child, and die a hundred times; but she does not know that governing a child means to teach it to take care of itself, without anybody's looking after it. And so she looks after her child. When it goes to bed, she looks after it; and when it gets up she looks after it; and every step it takes during the day she looks after it. It is, "My dear, do not do this," and, "My dear, do not do that." The child can scarcely yawn without going to ask its mother's permission. It is followed and hedged in, and cuffed gently this way and that way. And after fifteen years have passed, the child is a baby yet, as far as competency of judgment is concerned. It has not learned how to take care of itself. And having a strong temperament, and being frequently restrained, it has not been taught to govern its feelings by an exercise of them. They are all dammed up; and they are without practice. If children are imaginative, and full of sensibility, the world to them is a great wonder-box. And when they come to be twenty-one years of age, they go out and say, "I have never seen anything; I never felt anything; I do not know anything; I have always been shut up at home; and now I am going to have my revenge. I will first find out a thing or two." They are like men who go down into the battle naked—neither with weapons of offense nor weapons of defense. And they are smitten through and destroyed. Then people say, "How astonishing that a child who has been so thor-

oughly brought up should perish so!" The very mischief is that he was destroyed in the family. The very thing that the father and mother were told to do, they did not do, namely, to teach the child how to take care of himself. They took care of him all the while.

The child must sin if he is going to learn not to sin. You must let him stumble in order that the next time he may know where to put his feet. The child learns by the things which he suffers, the parent standing by to say, "There is the cause and there is the effect. Now look, after this." This disciplines the child's conscience, and disciplines his power of selection.

If it is not safe to do this, the other thing is still less safe. That is what is meant by the phrase "governing too much." I say that it is not governing too much: it is governing *wrong*. It is not governing so as to produce a potency in the subject.

5. There is an order in nature for the development of the child which we must observe and follow. First and earliest, is the animal life. And it is strongest as being the substratum, as it were; the soil out of which the others spring. Next is the line of affection and imagination. And the imagination is fertile and stronger far than reason. All the earlier instruction takes on the imaginative form, the pictorial form, the form of fable and parable. Later comes the intellectual and the abstract in the line of instruction. And last comes the moral sense.

Now the child does not carry up all these elements together. Everything does not go along at once. The child is literal and animal at first, and so it is for a year; but little by little it opens up out of the animal state. That which comes next is always the affectional and the imaginative. Still later—and frequently quite late; for these things come at different times with different children—come the reason and the moral sense. When the reason begins to dawn, first is the perceptive reason, as that which concerns itself with external objects. Next is the reflective. That comes later than the perceptive.

The parent then ought to know the order by which the child develops itself, in order to know how to properly train and discipline that child while he is yet a little animal. It is all in vain to attempt to make him a little saint. You cannot anticipate nature. Nature furnishes rules in respect to culture. We must give nature time, therefore. Our children will be animals, but they will leave their animal nature behind them little by little, as they are going on and going up. Do not be afraid because your child is not perfect at first. We must have faith to believe that each successive development of the child will correct the preceding.

Does your child exhibit animal instinct when he is five years old? Be of good courage. Correct it. Check it. And the lower down the

child is, the more is the rod beneficial. Physical force for physical conditions. As you go away from physical conditions, affectional influences come in. And as you go still higher, the intellectual and moral influences come in.

There is, as I have said, an order of nature; and when the child lives in the physical life, physical pain is better than argument which it does not understand and does not feel. But it belongs to the lowest form; and it should be always with this aim. The tendency should be to disuse it as soon as possible by carrying the child up to the next stage.

Now, when the child comes to the affectional state, it rids itself of a great many faults that you could not correct without the aid of nature. A child will outgrow most of his faults by the time he is five or six or seven years of age.

"My first child," says the parent, "was such a good child! But God took it away early. I was not good enough for it. But this next child—it does seem to me that the old Nick is in it, it is such an awful child. It lies, and steals, and is full of all manner of nasty habits. I do not know what I shall do with this child. I have prayed over it, and prayed over it, and prayed over it."

My dear friends, far be it from me to ridicule prayer; but then do you suppose that if your stove was broken, the way to mend it would be to pray? If your watch was broken you would send it to the watchmaker. And do you suppose, if you should go in April and stand under an apple-tree and pray for the apples to get ripe, and for the pippins to drop down into your cap, that they would? You must wait all summer for them to ripen.

I believe in praying for children, and laying up prayer for them; but I do not believe in praying for a child, expecting that the prayers are going to be answered in that child by a course which reverses the order of nature and works a miracle in it. A child that is only five or six or seven years of age, is living in but one portion of himself, and almost wholly in his animal conditions. Pray that you may be patient; pray that you may have grace until he comes up one stage higher; and by and by you begin to draw out the child's affection, and to connect him with processes or a system of self-control. And as the family gets larger, family government always gets larger, because one child helps to govern another. The first child comes into the second stage, and you will find that many of his faults disappear; so you will say to yourself, "Well, the child is really getting better." That is to say, the child has two sets of faculties; and the higher ones are beginning to govern the lower ones; the affection is beginning to have ascendancy over the animal nature. But in the management of the affec-

tion, which is full of selfishness, full of envies and jealousies, full of competitions, full of all manner of irregularities, your educated moral sense is offended, and you are in tribulation again about your child. You pray to God to sanctify the child early, and watch for the answer of your prayer, and are disappointed that it does not come. But wait. When the child is fifteen or sixteen years of age it undergoes a physical change, not only, but with that change there comes in also a moral change. Deeper moral impulses and wider inspirations and aspirations now manifest themselves. And you will find, if the child has been carefully governed and guided, that those faults which belong to the second stage disappear of themselves. The third range of motives then come in, and they correct the faults of the second, as the second came in to correct those of the first.

Now, this order of nature must be observed, not simply for the wiser bringing up of the child, but also for the removing of care, the burden of anxiety, and sense of awful responsibility to which many parents are in bondage.

Let me say, here, that I would not have these remarks construed into a disbelief that children may grow up Christians from the cradle. I believe they may. But you are not to look for a Christian man in a child's skin. There will be just so much as there is of the child, with all its faults and irregularities. The evidences that a child is Christ's are not the same evidences which a full-grown man exhibits who is a Christian. I believe that children may be converted and consecrated to God from the cradle—from the moment that they begin to experience symptoms of the heart; but then, they will not be Christians of the same pattern, or magnitude, or sympathy, or balance that we see among adults. They will require other treatment, and more treatment of certain sorts, than those who have come into mature life.

But while I believe in early conversions, I do not believe in early saintship. I think there is nothing more monstrous than a little five-year-old Puritan. Where there are these prodigies of piety, one of two things is usually true. The whole life of the child is premature, and he is marked for early death, and everything rushes to momentary ripeness, and he withers and dies; or he is over-cerebrated; he has not the muscle and bone and strength to resist the enormous reaction. High mental endowment may have a premature genius for goodness. And it is beautiful. But it is unnatuural, and is not to be coveted—and all the more because these children break the hearts of parents when they die and go.

But those that live and grow up—the Lord save me from them. Deliver me from premature saintship. I cannot endure to see a girl forty years old before she is five. I cannot endure to see a boy imi-

tating Isaiah or Dante when he is not yet out of his pantalettes. Childhood is the best thing for childhood, youth is the best thing for youth, middle life is the best thing for middle life, and old age is the best thing for old age. But old age grafted on to a young stalk is a very poor graft.

The attempt, therefore, to stuff our children with religious experiences; the attempt to make our children talk and pray and work like grown folks, is most disagreeable, as well as most unnatural. I think there is great injury in any such precipitate and premature development of a child. Let the child be an animal until it has outgrown animalism. Let it be social until it begins to be developed into the moral. Let the moral element come into ascendency and permanency when it comes by nature to be the strongest part. Till that time you must be to the child conscience and sensibility and taste. You must minister to the child by love from without, until he has by the natural evolvement of nature come to a point where he can develop his own conscience, and reason, and higher faculties.

As there is many and many a child that is ripe early, and breaks down in later life, so there is many and many a child that bids fair for the halter until he is after fifteen, and becomes noble and self-commanding in life as he grows older.

Ethical duties, then, should be learned from the beginning; but high religious experiences ought not to be urged upon any child. If religion is brought to children in any exciting form, it should be brought to them in its sweetest and most pleasurable forms.

6. If the child is a scholar, then the parent is a teacher; and the parent should know his tastes, and the tools with which he is to work.

First, governing mind is based on one simple fact, namely, that in the philosophy of the human mind one faculty is to be governed or changed in its action by the excitation of another and opposite faculty. We undertake to put down a feeling both in ourselves and in our pupils. But the art of putting down a feeling consists in the art of raising up another one which will put it down. If the child is peevish, there is no use scolding the child for peevishness. Let the peevishness alone, and awaken kind and benevolent feelings. Benevolence will take care of peevishness, and you will be saved the trouble.

Is the child full of audacity? Touch the feeling of fear in the child by an appropriate representation. You do not need to restrain the audacity directly. Correct audacity by fear. Fear will take care of it. Or, *vice versa*, courage, being raised in the child by praise, overcomes fear. There is a great deal of power in sympathetically lending courage to a child. If children are imaginative, and full of sensibility and acute temperament, they may often suffer immensely from

fear. I am not much of a coward, as I am accustomed to think of myself; but I went through a great deal of suffering of fear in my childhood, when it was not needful. For, under some persons' care, I was taught to be very courageous; and then I was able to face things which at other times I slunk down from with the utmost trepidation. A mother can breathe her large courage into a child, either morally or physically.

The art of governing a child's mind, then, is to know what part of it to touch, in order to countervail some other part. It is on this theory that all our faculties are in mates, or, as it were, in counterparts. Over against every single one of the faculties of the human mind there is a corresponding or opposite faculty. And so government comes. The excitation of one faculty is the restraint of another.

If, therefore, fear goes down, it is because courage is going up. Or if courage is running too high, lift up fear, and then courage will go down. If the child is full of grief, mirth will oftentimes cure it. And if mirth is carried too high, and the child is unduly gay and frivolous, then conscience, being touched, will frequently control and restrain it. And so a world of advice, a world of educating, a world of pointing out this and that, may be saved. You can psychologically teach the human mind sooner, you can more speedily bring the child to make use of his mind, than you can teach him to do it by philosophizings and explanations, half of which he does not understand.

There is also to be remembered this general rule: that the feeling which you bring to your child is probably the feeling which will exist in him. If you are courageous, your child will naturally feel the inspiration of courage. There will be a contagion. I believe that there is a mesmeric influence, a magnetic power, an aura, or whatever you please to call it, that goes out of one feeling in a man, and touches the corresponding feeling in another man. If you go to your child full of mirth, the child will laugh before you get near it. If you go to the child with great benevolence and kindness, the child runs into the same state of feeling. If your child is irritated, and that irritates you, and you go to the child to compel him, the result is that he gets madder and madder. He may not dare to show it; he may be restrained from exhibiting his anger by the motive of fear; but it is there. If the child is excited, you must be calm. If the child is revengeful, you must be most lenient, most forgiving. If the child is in any mood that you abhor, it is not for you to show your abhorrence of it. Every parent must be a pupil first, and then be a teacher. What you want your child to be, you must learn to carry to him.

Lastly, the supreme influence of moral government in the family, in the state, and in God's universe, I believe to be the light of kind

ness. Whatever may be the thing that you undertake, the law of kindness in the eye and on the lip and in the hand—in things negative and in things positive and affirmative—the law of the household, the law of association, must be kindness. That is the summer in which all the evil that is in children will naturally tend to wither early, and all the good that is in them will go forward with root and with stem, bearing abundant fruit. If you would govern your children well day by day, remember God is *love*. God *condemned the world for sin*, never converted a soul. God *so loved the world that He gave His Son for it*, has converted multitudes. It is love that is the Magister; it is love that is the Emperor; it is love that is the God.

Now, in closing, let me say to the young that are moving forward along the appointed paths of life, that gaiety and joyfulness, and entering into the marriage relation, and sending forth the joyful outcry, "Behold a man-child is born into the world," is all well. Do not think that I am out of sympathy with you in this. I will rejoice with your joy. But still there is not any thing so serious in life; there is no step that is so full of weighty responsibility as accepting from the hand of God one of his little ones, which you are to train. For the light and glory of having children in the family is not a mere matter of pride and social pleasure. It is a matter of the greatest moment. And while I would not take away from your joy, I would temper it with a deeper insight. I would give you a sense of what the meaning of this opening into life is, that you may bring to it all your heart, and all your soul, and cry unto God for help in this great work of your life. And let me say still further, that I count the rearing of children in the household to be one of God's opportunities, than which there scarcely can be any other greater. I do not undervalue other relations in life. To be a magistrate, to be a noble, to be a king, where these things are esteemed; to be a genius and an instructor in the community at large —this certainly has its dignity and its nobility. But, after, all, there is no place, it seems to me, that realizes so much of the virtue of Christ's heart, and there is no place that is so much like heaven, and there is no place that will be so crowned with honors, as that family in which the father and mother are striving to rear their children for usefulness in this life, and for immortality in the life which is to come.

You know very well that I do not believe there ought to be any prejudice, nor public sentiment, nor custom, nor law, to prevent a woman speaking in public, if she has a desire to speak, or singing in public if she has a genius for song. I believe that a woman may do anything which she feels called to do, and can do well. But while I honor these things, and stand for the liberty of woman in regard to them, it must not be thought that I consider a woman who

is so clothed with genius more noble on that account. I hold that the woman who sings hymns over the cradle that her child may learn the eternal songs of heaven, is doing a higher work than if she were like Jenny Lind, and sang on the concert stage. I hold that no orator, and no singer, and no artist-worker, is to be compared with the mother who is carving the image of God in the soul of her little child. And no mother need fear that she is obscure; no mother need long to go out of the household, as if it were an obscure place. *The Gate of Heaven* is inscribed over every humble family; and no Christian mother who is teaching her children in the school-house of her own heart, need crave any higher walk than that. Be content; thank God for the privilege; be faithful to your charge; and you, winged as the angels are, shall lead your young immortal one day higher and higher into the heavenly land, until you pause at the feet of Jesus.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

O Lord our God! wilt thou open thine arms and take thy children into the bosom of thy love. As thou hast committed them to the love of their parents, so take both parents and children unto thyself. And teach these parents how to teach their offspring, so that both may find their way, through faith and patience, to the heavenly land. Give them great joy of their children. May they be more precious to them than all other things on earth. May they be willing to spend and to be spent for them. May they not ask that they shall have their reward in this life (yet grant them somewhat of it); but may they look forward and believe in that life which is to come, when they shall be gathered, and all their children with them, group on group, none left behind, none lost, all saved, through the unspeakable mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Grant, we beseech of thee, that parents who are rejoicing in their children may know how to rejoice in the Lord. Grant that those who are heavy-hearted over their children may be lightened of their care and of their burden, and so guided of thee that they shall not fail to bring their children with them when they appear in Zion and before God.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt look upon those who have consecrated their children, whether in the public assembly or privately in their own closets. Accept that dedication which they have made of their children; and in so far as it lies in them, may they be able to bring up their children so that they shall be honorable and prosperous in this life, and also enter the life that is to come.

Grant, we pray thee, that we may be more and more rebuked at our want of faith, and our want of fidelity, and our want of earnestness, in rearing our children for God. Teach us how to use the world in their behalf without abusing it. Teach us how so to set an example before them that we may be a living Gospel to them.

Bless mothers, through whose sufferings we came into this world, and whose life was given for our life. And bless, we beseech of thee, their soli-

*Immediately following the baptism of children.

tude, and all the thoughts which they pondered deeply. Bless mothers as they set their children apart in the sanctuary at home, and pray over them, and instruct them in the way of the Lord. And grant that they may take comfort by the way, and rejoice in the tasks and the duties which thou hast made incumbent upon them.

And have compassion upon any who are not able to teach their children of Christ; who know thee not themselves; who cannot teach their little ones the way of life because they have not found it for their own feet. Lord Jesus, in the greatness of their care for their children, disclose thyself unto them; and may every parent that is training children for immortality, make sure of the help of God. And may thy love illumine their darkness, and fill them with hope, and with courage, and with true wisdom. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt teach us how to refine our life for our children more and more. Make our homes more and more full of the heavenly Spirit. Cast out all infirmity, and all rudeness, and all sin, and all clamor, and all things that offend the purity of thine eye, and the sweetness of thine heart. And we pray that Christian households may more and more be those lights that shall guide men from vice to virtue, and from the ways of this world and its wickedness to the ways of Jesus Christ and his virtue and joy.

Grant thy blessing to rest, we pray thee, upon those who are teaching. May those to whom thou hast committed the care of young souls waiting for the seal, not be overburdened with fear and anxiety. May they know how to cast their care upon the Lord, and have such a holy confidence and such a blessed courage that their children shall catch the inspiration, and overcome their easily besetting sins.

And we pray that thou wilt bless all schools for instruction, both in secular knowledge and in things divine. Bless our Sabbath-schools and Bible-classes, and all Mission-schools, and all those that, to-day, everywhere attempt to press knowledge upon the susceptible mind. Will the Lord guide them and bless them abundantly.

We pray for our whole land. We pray for knowledge, that it may spread, and that virtue may come with it. May temperance and self-denial and all true Christian charity prevail throughout this whole land.

Hasten the time when all nations shall know thee; when all shall be instructed and competent to instruct their offspring. And let the glory of the Lord, so long delayed, at last break forth as the morning, and all the earth see thy salvation.

We ask it for Christ Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the word of instruction which we have endeavored to give. May it do good. May it incite more thought, more prayer, more searching to see if it be in accordance with thy mind and will. Bless parents, and teach them how to be better parents. Bless their children; and in spite of the mistakes which they make, may thy grace triumph over their imperfect teaching. And may our children grow up to adorn life. And may they by faith take hold of the promises of the heavenly land. Bless us when we sing once more; and go with us to our homes; and finally, bring us to our homes above.

We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

WATCHING WITH CHRIST.

"What! could ye not watch with me one hour?"—Matt. XXVI., 40.

There was a particular place on the Mount of Olives, and in Gethsemane, to which Christ often resorted. It was a sacred place to him. It is said, "For Jesus often repaired thither with his disciples;" so it would seem that he did not select, every time that he withdrew himself from Jerusalem and went out there, just such a place as happened to suit him; but that he had chosen some nook; that there was some place to which he had become wonted, and which was specially dear to him. For he knew the benefit of association. We leave something of our hearts in every place where joy or sorrow comes to us. Our experience seems to go out to the material objects which are around us, when we have a heart-history; and our feelings seem to become the attributes of those outward objects, and to endow them with life. So our imagination takes hold. And afterward, all the things which were around about us when we were greatly exercised in soul seem to reach forth to us, and to enter into sympathy with us, as if they were living beings. And so the hearth; the door-stone; the old tree, that threw its branches over the house where we were reared as children; the well, into which from day to day many tears, it may be, were dropped, as the mother went to and fro; the brook, that sang to our sighing; the mountain ravine, where we wandered to get rid of busy life; a thousand places that in youth, or in struggling manhood, have been witnesses to our deep emotions—these things become personal to us, and afterwards throw back, in their shadow, something of our own selves upon us, and greet us with a human sympathy. And this is the only consideration of which material things are susceptible. No priestly hand can give virtue to stone or to mortar. No service, and no sprinkling of water thrice holy, can make any place holy. There is but one priest, and that is the human heart, and there is but one thing, and that is human experience, which can strike through material objects and give to them thereafter a sacredness.

Where men have studied long; where the artist has worked long;

SUNDAY MORNING, Nov. 20, 1870. LESSON: COLLOSIANS I. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 284, 769, 1323.

where the heart that has been tried has poured itself forth in prayer; where love has met us; where it has planted its immortal seeds; wherever our deepest and truest life has been unfolded—there we have a consecrated place, a temple "not built with hands"; and thither we are prone to resort as to a home. That is the heart's work.

When birds build their nests, they first gather rude sticks and pliant twigs, and bend them to shape; and then with mud, or glutinous secretions, they fill up the interstices. On this foundation they lay feathers and soft grasses and hair. When all is gathered and laid down, they settle themselves into the rounded nest; and, turning about and about, they smooth and finish the nest with their own breast. So it is with men that make homes. It is the bosom that does it finally, and not the bill nor the claw.

Under these olive trees there was a temple to Christ, compared with which the grand and glittering temple over against it was colder than the stone that it was, and emptier than the stone. Here, in this one place to which he had been accustomed to resort with his disciples, he had poured out tears and prayers, and held communion with them, and meditated his own work, and had communion with the Father, until the place itself was to him as the gate of heaven.

And now, as his last trial was coming, and the darkness was already lowering upon the horizon of the new day, he came back to this place of experience. He did not permit himself to be arrested among the vulgar in the street, who would deride the scene. Nor would he try the hearts of his friends in Bethany with terror and alarm by being arrested in their sacred dwelling. He came back to his own haunt; to the place whither he had been accustomed to resort. And there, he went through his last inward trial, and passed also, through the scenes of his trial and arrest. He knew the coming hour; and he took with him Peter, James and John, to watch with him.

Now, these were the three disciples that had the deepest affection, and the most power of expressing sympathy. For, although Peter was impetuous, he was just as impetuous in affection as in conduct. James and John, brothers, possessed largely the same nature—John the deepest; but in early life James is represented to have been the most meek and sweet-minded. And these three, best adapted to express sympathy, Christ selected to be the witnesses of his last experience.

But why should they watch with him?—for he said, "Tarry here and watch while I go yonder and pray." To watch was to keep awake, simply. What good could they do? They could not avert that inward trial, the shadow of which was already coming upon him. For, as astronomers know when none others think of it, that travelling through the heavens the vast shadow is progressing toward the sun

which ere long shall clothe it and hide it, so Christ knew that the great darkness which was to overwhelm him was approaching. And he went to this place on purpose, and carried thither the most sympathetic of his disciples, and set them down while he went on beyond, and said to them, "Now watch, for I go yonder to pray." Yet, what could they do? They did not even know what was coming. And if they had been ever so vigilant they could not have anticipated it; or, if they had, they could not have averted that great shadow which was coming upon him. They could not even enter into his sorrow when it did come. Had they been by his side, his groans would have seemed to them without interpretative meaning. Neither, had they known, could they have consoled him. His trouble was beyond their depth. What could they do? What can a little child do, that looks up into the face of the mother, and sees her tears dropping one by one, and knows not what ails her, and still less knows how to comfort her, and can only once in a while climp up into her lap and say, "Don't cry, mother." Were the disciples any stronger than that? And could they comfort Christ any more than in that blind way in which children's sympathy comforts parents—or sometimes heightens their sorrow? Since to watch with Christ could not have been to give him strength; nor to interpret anything to him; nor to enter freely and fully into his feelings, it could only be this, that the heart of Jesus in his great trial would be comforted if those whom he loved and who loved him were present with him, and were in sympathy with him. That is it. The nature of God is, to need love. The sun does not need shining on it. All the shining that there is comes out of itself. But so it is not with our God. For, while he doth pour forth tides of affection, while he has all heart-power, while he is the life of heaven, and is guiding the ages toward the better life of love, yet in his own nature, infinite and exalted, he does need to be loved back again. It is a hunger that is stronger in the divine heart than it is in any human heart. We are but new scholars in the school of love. We know how we need it. We know that life itself seems disbranched, and that all growths seem withered, without the cherishing atmosphere of affection. And how, as we go on in life, more and more we need it! We hardly untwine the cord of love to see how many threads there are that go to make it up, and how every thread if again untwined is itself made up of an infinite number of fibers. We are fed upon love. Even the rudest man must have his "friend," as he is wont to call him. But as we go up in virtue, as we go up in intelligence, and as we go on in life, it is the affection which we reflect, one upon another, that makes life rich; and to the human heart nothing is so grateful as the kindness of another. When a man is wan-

dering abroad, when he is in exile and in disgrace, when he is cut off from other men's smiles and confidence, nothing is keener than the suffering of heart-hunger for affection which he experiences.

Where did we get that necessity? What is it in us but the faint reflection of that love of God which hungers for love out of the depths of eternity; and which creates, and will go on forever and forever creating beings competent to love, and building them up into a higher stature of experience, that they may be able to love, and that that desire of affection which God has may be satisfied in the influx and in the vast accumulations of trust and confidence and affection which He receives from all his children.

This example of the Lord Jesus Christ is a mere inflection of that which is infinite in the heavens. He, when he went into the sad scene in Gethsemane, returned to the place endeared to him by a thousand tender associations. He, when he went to suffer, selected the three disciples which had the most adaptation to sympathy and affection. And when they went with him, though they could not see what ailed him, nor give him strength, nor in any way help him, except by being there, and being in sympathy with him, that was enough. He wanted that; and so he took the three loving disciples out of the band and set them near to him, and said, "Be with me while I suffer (for that, I think, is the interpretation that we may freely give to it); stand by me; feel for me; let me see you; let me know that you are here; watch with me while I go yonder to sorrow and to pray."

What these sufferings were, it is hardly necessary now that we should say. One thing is very manifest to me, all the way through the last scenes of our Saviour's life, and even when he was on the cross —namely, that the central element of suffering consisted in a feeling of loneliness. Not simply of loneliness, but of exile; and not of exile alone, but of banishment; and not of banishment alone, but of absolute desertion. It seems to me that in the mind of Christ there arose this impression: that he was cast forth from the universe. With all that vast nature, with all those depths unfathomable of affection, he felt himself to be a wreck on the shore of time. And his utterance on the cross seems to me typical of the whole experience which preceded it—"My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" He was alone as one that would never return again. And to such a heart as that—a heart that loved and must be loved—the sense of being utterly and forever an outcast, even if it was a divine illusion—a bandage, as it were, put over his eyes for the purpose of trial and affliction—while it lasted was a suffering as great as the human heart probably can bear, or as we can conceive of. And this I think to have been the feeling which underlaid the suffering of Christ: that he was cut off from men, and cut off from angels, and cut off, finally, from God.

But in that hour, when his loneliness was upon him, as he drew near to the great bank of storm and darkness that lay before; as he began to wrestle with this deep inward distress—in that hour he came back to his disciples, whom he would fain have had stand at the portal of his suffering with him, and found them asleep. And it was not a chiding, though it was disappointment, it was the voice of love, when he spoke, and said, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" Let me read the whole scene:

"And he took with him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee [James and John], and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Tarry ye here [that is, stay by me], and watch with me."

He could not bear to be alone in that minute, and he begged his own disciples, as one who, suffering, says, "Mother, take hold of my hand; hold me," that the very touch may convey more strongly the sense of presence.

"And he went a little further [that is, he went away a little beyond them], and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

And so that scene rounded itself up, and he went back to them again.

"He cometh unto the disciples, and found them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What! could ye not watch with me one hour?"

Then, however, thinking, in a moment he said,

"The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

He had compassion on them, and made their excuses for them.

"He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again; for their eyes were heavy. And he left them and went away again the third time, saying the same words."

And so, after all, though he longed for their consolation, he had none of it. We are not to blame them, because the scenes which they had been going through were such as had utterly exhausted them; and it was not in their nature to bear up under those circumstances, and keep awake; so the Master recognized their weakness, and with sweet excuse he allayed those feelings of regret which his words excited in their bosom.

I shall not follow this history further, except to develop this single fact—the need which our God has of our affection, and our sympathy, and our presence with him. I know not how it is with you, but it is just this that makes me love God. It is just this need of being loved in God, and just this sense of loneliness without it, that calls forth my affection for him. Power may be venerable, and wisdom may be admirable; but only affection is lovable. And if there be proclaimed a Jehovah higher and broader in power than any other; if his nature be made radiant; if he has all the elements in which philosophy re-

joices, and in which creative and conservative power rejoices, that does not make him one whom I can love, and therefore serve by love. But the moment that I perceive, in looking upon God, that nature out of which sprang fatherhood to men, out of which motherhood came, and out of which came companionship; the moment I look unto the divine nature and see, not grizzly justice, stern and remorseless, not crushing power, vindictive, or victorious even, but of depths and rounds and royalties of affection, then in looking upon life I am all the while, and on every side, seeing suggestions of the divine nature. As one, familiar with the sonatas and the symphonies of Beethoven, while passing along the street in summer, gets from out of the open window a snatch of a song, or of a piece that is being played, catching a strain here and another there, and says to himself, "Ah, that is Beethoven; I recognize that; it is from such and such a movement of the Pastoral,"—or whatever it may be; so men in life catch strains of God in the mother's disinterested and self-denying love; in the lover's glow; in the little child's innocent affections. Where did this thing come from? No plant ever brought out such fruit as this. Nature, dumb and blind, with her lizards, and stones, and thousand accumulations of matter, never thought anything like that. This and that harmony of light, the few hints which we see here and there—these have been sprinkled into life, dropping from above. And there is a fountain where exist elements and attributes of which these are but the souvenirs. And to me they all point back to something which we have not seen. As birds, when after moulting they begin to sing, break down in mid-song, and give only a snatch here and a snatch there of the full volume of their summer strains; so these hints, these little tinkling notes of love on earth, beautiful as they are in themselves, are not perfect, and are not understood until we trace them back, and feel that there is above, somewhere, One whose nature epitomizes all these things.

Go and look on the south side of the Highlands. You shall see that, detached from the rocks there, and lying in a long trail, for miles and miles, are blocks of syenite, or of trap, or of granite, as the case may be. And there is many a block which, if you choose, you can trace back to the very spot where the ice pried it out, or from which the flood or the iceberg drifted it along the mountain side. Now, as it is with those blocks of stone, so it is with these scattered elements and traits that have drifted out, as it were, from the mountain of God, and sweetened the household, and refined civilized life. They are, after all, but the outflowing, the drift, as it were, of the great divine Soul in this world. And taking these things as suggestions, and following them back again, we come to that central conception of divine love which

was manifested in Christ: not then created for him; not then created for the first time; not then made manifest as it is beyond, and as it will be still more significantly in ages to come; but shown under those circumstances and conditions which were best fitted to interpret it to us in the state that we were in. And we come back to the manifestations of the love of God with this predominant feeling: "I can love Love. I can love if God represent all that is represented, and more than is represented, in the tenderest relations among men; in the deepest affections; in the sweetest experiences. I can love, if God be not some great abstraction. If he be not some mere philosopher's circle swept coldly on the background of thought; if he be vital; if he be ineffably quick, full of fiery feeling; and if that feeling is tempered around about the tropic of love, that is One whom I can give my heart to; One whom I can give my allegiance to; One whom I can follow, and follow forever.

Yet, that he should in any way need me, I cannot understand. That I need him I can well understand; but that there should be that necessity in the Lord Jesus Christ by which he should say to me, "Watch with me;" that there should be an exigency in which he should feel, even in his earthly career, the need of a human heart—that masters wonder. That I cannot understand. It is a marvel, if it be true—and blessed be God, it is true—that while we can do nothing to the divine stature, and while we can do nothing to the divine wisdom, it is in the power of a heart that knows how to love, to do much for the divine happiness. For we are not to say that God is perfect in the sense that he can never feel any more. That is carrying philosophy to insanity. Every heart that loves God, makes him experience a divine gladness. Every soul that lifts itself up into the presence of God with adoration of love, makes him happier. And I should not believe in a God who could be unloved by all the realms above, and all the realms below, and yet be just as happy without being loved as with. No, the secret force of the ages is this yearning of God for men. It is this incessant working in them. It is this power, this germinating element, that is raising men up into the measure of the stature of greater purity, into nobler endowments of heart, and preparing them for better companionship when he shall gather them and bring them into his own immediate presence in heaven.

And now, further, is there not a relationship of this scene to our relations in this life, and to our experiences? Is Christ still upon earth in any such sense that it may be said that we are watching with him here?

I remark, that Christ's life is going on in this world; that it is developing here, I had almost said in some respects more wonderfully

than in heaven itself. In other words, the next representation is, that Christ has mingled his spirit with the hearts of the race; that by his life and example he is teaching men. And, above all, by his spiritual influences, Christ is germinating in the race his own nature, and is bound to carry the race above its animal conditions, and into the transcendent sphere where he himself is. He will reap himself, sowing now himself. So that his life is in myriads of souls in this world. In every soul that is feeling its way out from the lower toward the higher; in every soul that is obeying, in the slightest degree, the aspiration that tends to purity, and to truth, and to right, and to justice; in every soul that is even hating evil that it does not avoid, striving against it—in every such soul the motive-power is Christ. It is the life of God that is the leaven which is leavening that soul. This is going on in myriads of hearts; and not simply in those that are gathered into the churches—though they grow faster and ripen better there than elsewhere. Churches are gardens with walls that break the wind, and keep in the sun, and in every way make conditions favorable for quicker and riper growth. But outside of the walls, where the wind sweeps in the highway, there are many shrubs, and some flowers, and not a few fruits. And these, too, belong to the master, though they are in untoward circumstances. The life of Christ is going on in the church, and outside of the church, in those who scarcely know what it is that is developing them. There is a process of evolution going on in men. It is Christ in us the hope of glory—or the premonition of the hope. He is present wherever there is suffering in this world, and wherever there is sorrow. For he is the One who came to destroy sin, and him who is the power of sin—the devil. He came to destroy misrule, and all mistake, and to banish sorrow from the globe. And where there is, in all the earth, the sigh, the groan, the heart-sickness from hope deferred, there Christ is.

This identification of the Saviour with the race is one of the solemnest and most striking of all his teachings. For he represents himself as sitting in judgment, and bringing before him two classes of men, one of whom he blesses, saying, "I was sick, and in prison, and a stranger, and ye visited me, and comforted me, and took me in, and fed me when hungry, and gave me drink when thirsty, and clothed me when I was naked." And they, in astonishment, ask, "Why, when did this happen?" And he says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my disciples, ye have done it unto me."

And on the other hand, there come those before him whom he reproaches, saying, "Ye did not visit me, nor feed me, nor give me drink, nor clothe me, nor cheer me." And they say, "When did we see thee in exigencies, and did not succor thee?" And he replies, "Inas-

much as ye did it not unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me." In other words, he says, "I identify myself with the great race of men; and any kindness that ye bestow on them is bestowed on me, because they and I are one; and any neglect or cruelty that you inflict on them you inflict upon me, because they and I are one."

He, then, who strikes his fellow man, strikes his Saviour; and he who crowns his fellow man, crowns his Saviour. So that he who, from the divine feeling of kindness and philanthropy and true love, does good to any human creature, may be sure that it goes through and reaches Him who is identified with that struggling creature. And he who by selfishness, or pride, or cruelty, harms the least of God's children on earth, may be sure that the spear-point pierces not alone the suffering human heart, but that great Heart whose children we are.

Christ, then, is still in all those who are striving upward; in all those who are living a life of aspiration. He is present wherever on earth there is suffering and sorrow.

Men are accustomed, in great revolutions, in such tempestuous times as those which we now see in Europe, to say that the devil is abroad, and that the works of darkness are over all the earth. Doubtless this is true. But Christ is never so near to men as when it would seem that the kingdom of darkness was triumphant; as when the battle-field is an Aceldama; as when villages are in torments; as when whole wide reaches of country are desolated; as when all the sorrow that can be felt by the human heart is poured out in overmeasure from day to day. And though the voice of Christ is not heard, and his form is not seen, there is patience, and there are inspirations of hope, and there is courage to die—or, more than that, often, courage to live. The sustaining and upholding Christ is not gone from the world because we do not see him. He still walks, though not in Jerusalem alone. He still teaches, though no longer by audible words. He still inspires, although there be no day of Pentecost again. And wherever men are struggling, and striving, and suffering, be sure that the life of Christ is there. For he does not wrap himself up in his heavenly home and look out of the window, only, upon this far-off earth. He lives in nature.

Wherever, then, in all the earth, there are those who need guidance; wherever there are those who need instruction; wherever there are those who are seeking the upward way, and looking about for some one to guide them—there the Saviour is with them.

He, then, is watching with Christ, if these be truths, who watches with the Saviour in his earthly ministrations. All who go down in their own personal experiences into deep places; all who become familiar with sorrow; all who sit in darkness; all who come, as he did, as

it were to the very foundations of their hope and of their being, and are obliged then and there to do as Christ did—look up to the loving Father for help—all such, if they be faithful, if their trust does not yield, if they grasp firmly that anchor which is sure and steadfast, and hold on through the night and through the storm, are watchers with Christ. A man can watch with Christ in his own experiences, as well as in the experiences of others. There is many and many a man who is tempted more than he is able to bear, or, in a mighty wrestle of temptation, is well-nigh overcome. Nevertheless, whoever, under such circumstances, maintains his hold and still cries out for relief; whoever, under the various alternations and experiences of this mutable life, finds himself cast down headlong to the ground; whoever finds his cup filled to the brim with bitterness which he cannot put away from his lips, and which his lips do not dare to drink; whoever finds that tears are his meat and drink, day and night, and yet gives up no particle of hope, but stands in his darkness and in his sufferings, saying, "Jesus! *Jesus!* Jesus!", still laying back his head upon the bosom of Christ's love, and saying, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him"—whoever does these things is watching with Christ. For Christ is working in him. And this is the hour of Gethsemane to him. He is truly watching with the Master.

He who, like Christ, admits the brotherhood of men and cares tenderly for all—for the tempted; for those who are out of the way; for those who are sufferers, even though they are suffering by the penalty of their own sin; he who looks upon men's sins, their crimes, their vices, and the sorrows which spring from them, not in an adjudicatory spirit, not in the spirit of one who measures by the law of justice, certainly not in the spirit of criticism, but as if the offenders were his own beloved brethren, and when he sees sorrow and suffering hides not himself from it but stands by it, and feels that he has a mission to it—he who so stands by his fellowmen from day to day, may eminently be said to be watching with Christ.

Christ is now, not under the olive-tree, nor over against Jerusalem, but everywhere. Wherever one is with the poor and needy—whether it be upon the plantation, or in the leafy forest, or in the lumberman's tent, or in the log-cabin of the frontier, or in the canal-boat, or upon the ship's deck, or in the mine, or in the streets, or in cellars, or in attics, or in haunts of vice, or in those dreadful chambers beyond where vice torments before it slays, or in hospitals, or in jails—there Christ is.

Oh! how much of life there is that lies outside of hope! Oh! how much of life there is that writhes as if it were possessed with a devil—as it is! And how few there are to stand by the lost, the outcast, the neglected, the overthrown, the destroyed, as Christ would, healing, for

giving, comforting, guiding! There is many a chance where you could watch with Christ; but you pass by it. It shocks your feelings, or you have not time; or, more likely, you have not the heart. And yet, again, and again, and again, your brother and mine has fallen down in his blood; and we have been guilty in this: That we have left him unsuccored, and uncheered and uncomforted, on the cold theory, "He brought it on himself; he must reap what he sowed; he must bake as he brewed." But so did not Christ.

Those who are in the midst of the glare and growth of material things in this life, and identify themselves, notwithstanding, with the interior, with the spiritual, with the religious affairs of men, may fitly be said to be watching with Christ.

There are those who know that what the eye sees, and the hands handle, is but the case, is but the packing; and that the reality of things is invisible and lies within; and that the *kingdom of God comes not with observation.* The eye cannot see, nor the ear hear, nor the hand handle it. It is the growth of purity. It is the growth of sweetness. It is the growth of faith. It is the growth of intuition It is the prophecy of love in men's souls.

There be men who, while they are faithful in the outward relation of life—builders, bargain-makers, transactors of the affairs of other men—have all the time a sense that the reality of Christ lies far within or beneath these things. And they are true to this inward kingdom of God, and to this reality of Christ, and of things within. All such men are watchers with Christ. They stand by him in those respects in which he is most intimately manifested in the affairs of this life.

Still further, those especially who are watching as Christ taught that we should watch, are those who watch for the souls of men, and not for Christ alone. Every mother who stands by her children from day to day watching for their unfolding into virtue; every father who succors the tempted children as they step out into life; every father and mother who, from day to day, carry their children again until they are born into Christ; every one that looks upon the children of his friends, and goes in birth for them; every one that inspires the little child with upward knowledge; every one that pities and has compassion upon the ignorant and upon those that are out of the way; every one that leads a young man from worse to better courses; every man who, for the sake of doing good to a soul, turns one single sinner aside from the evil that is in him; whoever goes after an intemperate man, to cheer him, to comfort him, to win him, and to bring him back; whoever goes to an impure man, to bring him to purity, and back to God, the Shepherd and Bishop of his soul; whoever goes to the care-

less; whoever builds up those who are beginning to be broken down; whoever believes in the truth, and preaches it; whoever, night and day, is going out to seek and save the lost—every such one is in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. That is his work. Through the ages he has been doing it, in low and imperfect ways that will seem yet one day glorious. Christ lives to bring sons and daughters home to glory, and whoever keeps step with him is his companion; and whoever goes, at some expense, whoever goes paying his own warfare charges, by thought, by toil, by self-denial, bearing souls onward and upward, is watching with Christ.

Dear brethren, do you know that you could not do anything that would touch my heart so much as that which you should do to my child? You might put a fortune upon my shoulders, and I should be grateful; but he who helps my child to begin his life aright burdens me with gratitude a thousand times more. If my child were in peril, and you should succor him in a distant city, and the tidings should come home to me, I could not find words to thank you for what you did for him. I should be grateful if you did it for me, but not so much as if you did it for my child, because my child is himself and myself too; and my feelings for him are more than my feelings for myself. What you do for my child is the deepest and truest service that you can render me.

And how do you think it is in the bosom of your God and your Saviour? If you take up in your arms the despoiled, and the outcast, and the lost; if you wash them in your tears; if you are to them, in your small way, what Christ has been to you; if you call them, and bring them back again from wrong courses; and if you are permitted to stand in his presence in the last day, and say to him, "Here am I, and these," what will be the joy which you shall experience! What will be that gladness, what will be that love, which will roll forth from the soul of Jesus to any one of you that watches with him on earth, and watches with him in behalf of his little ones!

I cannot come to you, my Christian brethren, to urge upon you today the *duty* of watching for souls. It is a *privilege*. It is a privilege which cannot be described. We cannot make it known upon earth, because we know so little of heaven, and so little of God. But be sure of one thing—that when God permits you to be workers together with him, fellow-laborers with him; when he commands you to count it all joy if you fall into divers trials, and he says, "To you it is given also to suffer with Christ;" when God gives you the privilege of watching companionably with him, of working with him, nay, of being a fellow-laborer with him in behalf of his own children, do I need to urge a motive of duty, or a motive of interest? It seems to me that any one

who acknowldges himself redeemed by the blood of Christ; any one who remembers the bitterness of his own sin; any one who knows the joy of his own soul; any one who ever felt in his closet gratitude unutterable to Him who loved him, and gave himself for him—it seems to me that any such one will feel all his thought and memory, and every impulse of his sanctified heart, rising up to spur him on to fidelity, to labor, to work in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, for the days that remain.

Brethren, our days grow pale. The night itself is coming. Every day is now growing shorter and shorter. The sun shines less and less, and the night grows longer and longer. Our night is coming. And if we have anything to do for Christ, anything for our children, anything for those that are in our employment, anything for our neighbors, anything for the poor and the outcast, we must do it quickly. For you soon will go. The messenger has started for some of you, and he is not long delaying for any. And if, when you go up, you shall have done nothing, and you shall enter heaven so as by fire, woe, woe is you! But who are they that fill the air and throng the battlements? They are the rejoicing spirits that come to greet him whose whole life has been watching with Christ, and who is coming up thither to receive the benediction, "Enter, welcome, good and faithful servant."

May the work of your life be the best work of which your life is capable; and may the best work of your life be that which you register on the souls of those that but for you would have perished without light, and without knowledge, and without salvation.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We thank thee, our Father, that thou hast created us better than the beasts which perish. For, though we have all outward sense, and inherit this material globe with them, our souls blossom far above theirs. Thou hast given to us a noble outgrowth; and that which is within us reaches up to that which is within thee. And we are called thine own children. We are born of thee, and are tending toward thee, and seeking by the whole mystery of life to find our way into thy presence. We rejoice, though as yet we are not permitted to see thee face to face. Nor is there such communication between our souls and thine as we have one with another. Yet we rejoice in the reality of the things unseen; in the power of the world to come; in the glory of thy character; in the faith of thine administration. What we cannot see is clearly discerned by thee. And all the wealth above our heads; the realms of rejoicing spirits; the royalties of thine own kingdom; the dear delights and transcendent joys which there do flourish without darkness or winter, without storm, without tears,—all these, our souls crave to believe. Although they are veiled from us sometimes by the power of the world; although they are sometimes hidden from our view, by the dust that rises from beneath our feet; though at times sorrows overmaster our faith; though excess of care, and despondency, and sickness of body, and sickness of soul, do hide the great and blessed truths above, and but just above us, yet there they are, and thou by thy dear Spirit dost minister them to us from time to time. And as, in days that are stormy, the clouds do part to let us see the blue beyond, and we know that not far above the storm is the calm and the brightness; so, in this life, in its disturbances and troubles, thou art letting through, at times, the blessed light of the serene heaven above us. We know that we have not sent out our beloved into a world of uncertainty and chance. Our children are safe that have gone away to thee. Our friends are safe that have died in the faith of Jesus. They walk with him, and rejoice with him, mourning more for us, if there were mourning in heaven, than we for them; they, in the plentitude of their joy; they, in the greatness of renewed strength; they, in the fulness of emancipation and in the glory of the heavenly manhood; but we, still stinted and care-marked, and weary of shoulder, that bear heavy burdens. We that despond so easily and suffer so much,—why should we mourn the departed? Why should we not mourn the living? We thank thee for their joy. We thank thee that on such days as this heaven comes very near to us, and renews our assurance, and above all the assurance of thy being, and thy presence, and thy sympathy, and thy love.

O grant, we beseech of thee, that we may have something more of that joy which our souls need. For as the earth cannot ripen its fruits and plants without the sun, so neither can we ripen in joy or grace without the shining of thy face upon us.

Grant unto us, this morning, then, dear Master, the tokens of thy presence. May our heart hear thee, though our outward ear may not. May it hear thee calling us sons. And though chastisements may be upon us, may we hear thee saying, "Whom I love I chasten, and scourge every son whom I receive."

May we rejoice, then, at these strokes of love. May we rejoice at care. May we know how to triumph over all temptation. May we know how to bear everything that in thy providence is laid upon us, and fulfill, if need be, in our bodies, the measure of affliction which is lacking in thine. Grant, we

pray thee, that we may have, from day to day, this sense of thy care, and of the great coming joy that will be wrought out in us by faith and patience and perseverance.

And now, may we be filled on the way, not with sorrow alone, but with those joys which are born of sorrow. And while we sigh, and are sad, may there spring to our lips many and many a song of triumph. May we pluck beforehand from the branches that fruit which hath in it eternal life. And may we joy in each other, and bear one another's burdens, and pray for one another, and forgive one another, and in all things be to each other what the dear Jesus was to his disciples when he companioned with them on earth. May we walk together bound by invisible bonds, and united by that relationship which is in thee. Uphold us O blessed Saviour, until the end doth come; and then, may we find each other in immortality and glory.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless those in thy presence as thine eye discerns them severally to need thee; and as thy providences are allotted according to some wise measure in thy will, so may thy grace be allotted according to the dispensations of thy wisdom and of thy mercy. Wilt thou sustain the feeble; wilt thou strengthen the weak; wilt thou encourage the desponding; wilt thou comfort the sorrowful; wilt thou take away fear from those that are timid; wilt thou help every one that is conscious of his load of care, or trouble, or temptation, or easily besetting sin. Help, O thou Helper! every such one.

And we beseech of thee, O Lord, that all such may obtain mercy and help in time of need. If there be any that are afar off, crying as the leper cried, Jesus, make them clean. If there be any that cannot believe, and yet would, and cry, "Lord I believe, yet help my unbelief," have compassion upon them. If there be those that mourn over their own sinfulness, and know not how to get rid of its remorse and pain, speak words of forgiving love to them. Say to them, "Son, thy sin is forgiven thee." And may they have that peace which passeth all understanding, in that they are accepted of God in the Beloved.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt open the hearts of thy servants, to labor for those around about them; to speak more; to pray more; to watch more; to instruct men more tenderly and earnestly respecting things which pertain to their salvation.

Wilt thou revive thy work everywhere. In this church and in all other churches in the city, wilt thou grant thy servants more power to proclaim the truth. Grant them more fidelity, and a great deal more success. May they be more and more fruitful from year to year. If there be any that labor in word and doctrine, and yet bear sorrows, and troubles, and despondency, wilt thou cheer and comfort them, and gird up their loins, that they may not faint by the way. Pity those that sit in darkness. Look everywhere throughout the land unto the waste places.

Grant that schools may spring up everywhere; that churches may be everywhere found, and that the light of intelligence and the light of truth may go forth together, and all parts of our land be regenerated.

Pity the nations of the earth. Spare them that are cast down. Grant that men may feel that there has been enough and more than enough of war and of the shedding of blood. O grant that the iron sceptre may go down, and that the sceptre of peace may go up. Take blood from out of the banners, and let the witness of purity and of peace come in instead. And grant that ere long there may be no trumpet sound in all the earth except the silver sound of thy trumpet; and no banner but that of Jesus; and no warfare but that against sin.

Grant these things, O thou blessed God! in the name of Jesus thy Son and our Saviour. And to him, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt help us to be faithful, not only to our light, but to thee. Bring near to us a sweet conception of thy being, and of thy nature, and of thy sympathy, and of thy tenderness, and of thy love, and of the hunger to be loved that is in thee. And may our hearts be drawn out toward thine. Inseparably may we be united to thee. May nothing separate us from thee. All our senses shall not separate us from thee. They are the reason why we need thee above everything else. Our temptations shall not separate us from thee. They are themselves the very causes why we should cling tighter to thee. Nothing present, nothing to come, neither height nor depth, shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. O grant that we may be ashamed to take this store and treasure of love selfishly. Is there nothing for us to do? Can we not requite it? If a child brings us a flower we think of something to give back again. If a friend speaks a kindly word, and we hear of it, how kindly are the thoughts with which we reward that friend. If they are united to us who have served us in this life, shall we not think of something to give them? And shall we not think of some love to requite them? O grant that we may not stand as the heath in the desert, overflowed with the light of summer and its warmth, and yet bearing nothing,

Grant, we beseech of thee, that the love of God may work love in us, and that the example of Christ may work more a sympathetic sorrow in us. May we look into our households, and may we begin to spur ourselves on. May every one feel that he has the sacred work of God to do. May thy servants begin to pray as they have not prayed for a long time. May they be more tender-hearted. May they take hold of each other's hands; and may they sink all differences; and may the love that is in Christ bring new light and new love to every one of us. And may we begin a nobler pilgrimage, a nobler march, a greater conflict, a truer work. And wilt thou, O Spirit! guide it and consummate it.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

THE TENDENCIES

OF

AMERICAN PROGRESS.

It is well for us to pause, in our career, to consider whither our national life is tending. For we are too apt to become so engrossed in our private affairs as to have but a dim and feeble sense of our relations to the life of the whole community. Or, if we cast a glance upon the tendencies of our times, it is apt to be superficial—a judgment which follows rather our disposition than our reason. To the hopeful, things are always bright; and they are always dark to the cautious. Prosperous men think the country is doing well; and the unfortunate see the signs of impending mischief and of quick-coming ruin on every hand. Men are apt to judge of the drift of things by the impressions made upon them by the things which are nearest, or by the welfare of the special cause to which they are giving their time and zeal. If that zone of life and force which is in contact with them is stormy, they feel that it is stormy away to the horizon, though but just a step beyond it may be tranquil; and if the affairs in which men have embarked their chief zeal and their affections are withstood, and are declining, they are apt to think that the whole work of God in the world is weary and slow-paced.

While, then, it is proper that we should recognize superficial prosperity, and personal prosperity, and all forms of experience from the personal stand-point, we are far more earnest to inquire whether under the surface the tendency of things is onward and upward, or level, or working downward. But in order to this we must have some determinate rule or measure. We must not judge by the eye, nor by our senses, nor by a transient criterion.

The most obvious, and historically the first, condition of prosperity in any community is physical thrift, material wealth; and surely there can be no national life of any great worth without that. For there must be prosperity in material things if there is to be prosperity in moral things in the last estate. Still, a nation may be prospered in

THUSDAY MORNING, Nov. 24, 1870. LESSON: ISA, LX. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 1,003, 1,004.

the field, and at the loom, and on the ship, and on the shore, and yet be degraded and declining. For material welfare, although it be an indispensable element of national prosperity, is the lowest, and is to be subordinated to all others. Above it is the social and civil development of a nation. Far superior in importance to mere physical wealth is the wealth which comes from institutions, from laws, from the conduct of the people, and from the whole course of civilized society. But yet higher than this is moral and spiritual good. For without faith civilization itself soon becomes tame and powerless.

The highest prosperity, then, is associated with spiritual good. Next to that is social; and lowest of all is material. And in this order we are to judge of prosperity. That material good is prosperous which is working toward the social and toward the spiritual. That social and civil condition of society is wholesome which recognizes the higher law of religious development.

Now, in looking upon our national condition it is not enough that we see unbounded prosperity on the farm, at the forge, in the shop: we must ask whether this prosperity lies in the line of intelligence, of real virtue; whether it guides itself by moral principle.

On the other hand, in looking upon the imperfections and positive evils which attend the various elements of national life, men are not to be discouraged because there is much in them that is still evil; nor because in some places things are going backward, like eddies upon mighty rivers. For this is the law of all progress. But are things, *on the whole*, tending toward, or away from, moral elements? That will determine the question of prosperity.

Look, then, at our own condition teritorially. What other nation has such a field for extension, such a field for development, such a field for material prosperity? Russia alone, perhaps, of all nations, has a territory as extensive as America. In all except bulk though, how different! Our climate, from the north line to the very gulf, is congenial to industry. There is no league in which climatic influences forbid prosperity; but the Russian climate is too rigorous. Through perhaps one third, or one-half—through vast spaces at any rate, it is unfavorable even to life itself, and life can never be developed into any great degree of society-force. Our soil, except a central tract (and that less barren than men suppose) is cultivatable throughout. Theirs is largely sterile. Our population is English-speaking, and homogeneous in ideas, though heterogeneous in origin. But all this, a prodigious condition of power if other things favor, is useless,—and, worse than useless, will be corrupting,—if there are not other elements of prosperity than merely that which is given us, of territory.

Then, our people carry with them everywhere self government,

and *a genius for it.* Partly, this is the quality of race. We spring mainly from a stock in which inheres the tendency to government, and self-government. And partly it is a thing learned. Our people have learned it; and government, therefore, and laws, go with every colony just as surely as yokes and harnesses go with their teams and herds. Men never emigrate without carrying their household wealth and the material for employing the soil in husbandry. But tools and implements are no more necessary in their judgment than are the institutions and the customs which make men societies. Wherever you throw a hundred Americans, you may be sure that almost their first thought will be to constitute themselves into a body politic. They do it as naturally as water comes together in crystals when cold congeals it. They come by a kind of elective affinity under laws and under constitutions.

Contrast that great and unfortunate nation, France, with our own in this respect. Their self-governing instinct seems never to have been developed. The tendency is feeble, and cultivation has never been applied to it. How to be governed they but just know; and how to govern themselves, not at all. But with us this is one of the most marked national features, the indispensable necessity of being governed, and the indispensable determination to let nobody do it for us, but to do it ourselves.

Our people, also, carry institutions which are to moral force what machinery is to physical force. Institutions are but the condensations of power. They are artificial persons, as it were, to whom is given an unweariable existence—a life longer than the life of those that made them. They are the devices of civilization for storing up and preserving and fitting out moral things, and are indispensable to the strength and constancy and perpetuity of communal life.

But all these are but conditions. What now are the general tendencies of the material prosperity of America which are being developed, with such a territory, with such a people on it, with such civic advantages? On the whole, are they toward intelligence, and morality, and a higher spiritual growth?

1. The mass of our working population, I think, were never so well clothed, so bountifully fed and so well housed, as they are now; and the tendency is not backward, but forward. Our working population, to the very lowest stage and class, tend to more refinement in their food, more taste in their apparel, and more culture in their dwellings, year by year. In other words, the lowest material conditions are working upward, and not downward. Plainness of apparel, and of circumstances surrounding, are not signs and tokens either of civil growth or of Christianity. The general impression

is, that, as nations are better, they will be economical. I think, on the contrary, they will be profuse, and have the means of being so. The impression is that they will be unadorned. I think they will be more glorious than Solomon was, in all his apparel. The impression is that the law of simplicity in the sense of littleness of having and using characterizes virtue and religion. Far from it. As you go toward the savage state, you go away from complexity, from multitudinous power, down toward simplicity, and when you come to the lowest state—to the simplicity of men that wear skins and leather apparel, and live in huts and caves—you come to the fool's ideal of prosperity. But from that low animal condition starts development, and nations go on opening their faculties; and every faculty becomes a market, and demands supply. And the more culture a man has, the more parts of his nature there are which ask for material, for institutions, for raiment, for comforts of every kind, the more there is in the single man demanding these things, the more must his circumstances open up, and become rich and potential. And in looking upon the condition of the community, if you find that they are increasing in the variety of their food, in the quality of their food, and in the excellence of cooking their food; if you find that their dwellings are growing better and better from period to period; if you find that their furniture is more beautiful, answering other ends than merely the mechanical and physical ends—ministering to taste, ministering, if you will, to luxury—if you find these things, they are signs of upward development and of growth. These are the signs which we find all the way through our people, clear down to the bottom. And we are beginning to find them, as I knew we should, among the Freedmen themselves. For no sooner was their bondage broken than they began to feel that they were no longer animals, but men, and began, partly from imitation, and partly from that instinct which is common to all men, to gather around about themselves these evidences of growth, development, power.

We do not think that anywhere on the globe men, on the whole, live so well as in America—or grumble so much! But that is an indispensable thing. For as men live better, their criterion of life grows with the betterment. Taste increases in a greater ratio, oftentimes, than possession; and men are dissatisfied, not so much by what they have, as by the proportion which what they have bears to their ideal. It is our ideals that make us grumblers. And so there is some comfort in that.

The tendency, also, is to augment the conveniences, the beauty, and the resources of homes. There is universal social ambition among the laborers of America. They feel the dignity of citizenship. Power,

with its responsibility, has produced upon them the effect that we knew it would. It has educated, it has inspired, it has developed them. And the consequence is, that they feel, not that they are a class of working men, but that they are members of society. They call themselves *citizens*. They belong to the common people. They are a part of the one great loaf; and though each one is but a crumb, unbroken, every crumb is loaf. And this, too, is a sign of growth in the right direction. Show me a man who is content with things just as they have been, when he has it in his power to make them better, and I will show you a man whose tendency is the wrong way. He is by just so much less than a man who is contented with inferior conditions of manhood.

There are other signs of thrift. The great fermentation and combinations everywhere pervading working men are full of promise—and vexation! They vex the present, but they will bless the future. This has nothing to do with the wisdom or the folly of any of the particular measures which the laboring men may take. All causes which come up from the bottom of society find their way up by the hardest; and mistakes are the rude nurses of ignorant men—rude, but faithful. No class and no nation ever was raised from the bottom by very much help from the top. Thus far men have scarcely discerned, and certainly have not learned, that superiority is an ordination of God, and makes the superior class the nurses and helpers of the inferior. But aristocracy has grown out of superiority, for the most part. As soon as any class has had the power to rise, it has separated itself from the lower class, and called itself cream, and desired to be skimmed off!

And so it has been that class after class, as we go down in society, have been obliged to fight their own battle, and largely to fight it against those who should have been their helpers; and instead of succor from those who were wiser and stronger than themselves, they have had resistance.

Now, it is not strange that when men are fighting their way up from the bottom of society, they are at first ignorant of the best modes; that they make mistakes in the instruments selected, and in the measures devised. It is not presumption against the validity and excellence of any cause that its advocates are making many mistakes. Nothing could be worse than contentment in degradation. And there is nothing, with all its mistakes, that is more auspicious than aspiration and enterprise among laboring men. Therefore when I behold them counseling, and gathering themselves into innumerable forms of association, and learning among themselves brotherhood, and forming habits of common thought, common purposes, and common government, whatever may

be the inconveniences of the present, I regard such things as pre-eminently auspicious. They show that the laboring classes are not dead; that they are not inert; that they are a living mass; and that they mean to live to some purpose, and are finding out the way to do it. My heart goes with these my fellow-citizens under such circumstances, even when my head does not.

Very significant, too, is the assimilative power of American institutions, as shown in the condition and the conduct of foreign labor in our midst. For it is not our native-born citizens alone that are laborious, that are enterprising, that are accumulating property, that are good citizens, and obedient to the law. There have been thrown upon our shores vast masses, now almost uncountable, of men born under other skies, other institutions, and other customs, with other ideas. They are poured upon us by millions. Many have feared that they would change the color of the nation; that they would gradually undermine its laws; that, like the flowing of the stream which will chafe even rocks, so at last, by continual attrition, this vast mass of men pouring in upon our institutions would take the temper out of them. But they have not. Our institutions are stronger to-day, with all their population from abroad in them and under them, than they were fifty years ago, or even twenty-five years ago. And in those periods of critical peril when everything seemed put in jeopardy, there was no part of our whole population from the north to the south, or from the east to the west, that was more patriotic than our foreign population. And when, afterward, still other moral perils ensued, and the credit of the nation was at stake, there were no parts of our population, taking the country through, that were honester and truer to the national integrity than our foreign population.

And why should they desire to destroy those institutions for which they voyaged the deep and left their own land? It is the peculiar advantage of popular laws and institutions, that they are just such laws and institutions as common men want, and therefore are just such as common men do not want to destroy. Except in a few cities, and, to be plain, except from one nationality, we have scarcely heard a word of lawlessness from the great throng of our foreign population. The Irish are an ingenuous people. They are very frank and open, and they usually speak out what they think, and frequently act too openly and impulsively; and I must admit that there has been some trouble springing from them. Yet I say, without hesitation, that in fifty years all the trouble will have been a cheap price to have paid for the good qualities which that stock will infuse into the Anglo-Saxon stock. It is *good* stock, though it is very hard to work up. But with this single exception good-naturedly named, where have we found trouble from our foreign population?

With occasional and sporadic exceptions, where have we found better citizenship than among them? Where have we found men that, on the whole, not only were conducting themselves better, but were contributing more directly to the welfare of the state, or of the regions where they had settled down, than our emigrant population? They mingle among us; and in one generation they are as indistinguishable from us as if they and their parents had been born in our midst. They do not clog our courts; they do not mob our streets; they do not make aggression upon law nor upon civil liberty. Their virtues, their wisdom, and their industry we ought to recognize, both with surprise and with gratitude.

Nor do I believe that it will be in the power of China to do what all Scandinavia cannot do. I am just as little afraid of the East, or the West—no, I do not know which way China is—I am as little afraid of the *Oriental* as I am of the European. Coming with another tongue, not easily to be changed, and coming with a very different race-temperament, and with very different culture, it may take longer to digest them; but I think that even a Chinaman, when he has been thoroughly swallowed by American institutions, will, though he lies long by them, be at last digested, and that he will make good blood withal. So that I am not afraid of the importation of Chinamen. And though they do not understand it, others will, when I say, *All hail!* and *Welcome!*

There may be many who object to the Chinese on account of their compulsory carriage hither. They are ashamed to admit that this country is shut against the poor and the laboring classes of any land under heaven; but they find fault with the carriage of them by enforced emigration. "Let them come freely," say they. Oh yes, let them come freely, say I, only let them *come!* As for letting them come freely, here are both hands for that. But the difficulty is not that it is an enforced emigration, but that it is a competitious labor. And on that ground I say, shame, *shame* be to any class of men who have themselves made their fortunes by bringing in cheap labor against our own native labor, and have established themselves with our full welcome, and then turn to repel others who come just as they came, bearing what they bore—willingness to work, and ability to work cheaper than our own laborers!

For the law of God is that men, as they come up, cannot afford to work cheap. Nothing can work cheap except that which *is* cheap. If you have only a hand to sell, with no thought in it, and no skill in it, you can afford to sell that hand cheap; but if that hand has forty years of experience and thought; if that hand represents the whole machinery of your mind and soul, you cannot afford to sell it cheap—

and I do not want to have you. And in every community there must be these classes. The lowest and most ignorant, who have never gone to school, nor had the means of culture of any sort, will of course work cheap; and they will work cheap because they bring so little in their work. But as working is instruction, they come up; and every step they come up they give more, and ask more, and get more because they give more. It is the *quid pro quo* that makes the price all the time. It is the great law of equivalents.

And so, while one class of foreign population, taking advantage of the opportunity offered, have been laying the foundations of a moderate competence, and have been going up, the prices of their labor have been rising. And I do not object to that. I want the prices of their labor to rise, because I believe that they give more in the same number of hours than they did when they were unskilled laborers.

But we want another class below them. And when *they* come up, we shall want another class below *them*. "The workman is worthy of his hire;" but it is one of the misfortunes of ignorance that it does not know how to be wise.

The very thing that we need more now than almost anything of the lower interests of our land, is labor. With our vast intermediary territories—that land which for a hundred years will hardly see seed-corn for lack of the hands to open the furrows and plant it—are we in a condition to turn away any man who will come here honestly to labor and to thrive? I say, God bless the Swede; and God bless the Dane; and God bless the German, a hundred times over; and God bless the Frenchman and the Italian, if they come here to be good citizens; and God bless the canny Scotchman, and the sturdy Englishman, and the mercurial Irishman; and God bless a little more the Chinaman,—because he needs a little more!

On the whole, then, there is occasion for courage and for thanks in regard to labor, and in regard to the laborer. Labor is remunerative. The field for it is almost illimitable. Its product is wonderful. The laborers are no longer brute beasts. A change is going on perpetually. There is fermentation, there is circulation, there is emulation; and little by little our laboring classes are coming up in intelligence; in organizing power; in forecast; in refinement; in the amplitude of their domestic conditions; in all the things that go to make men happy here, and that make virtue easy and aspiration natural.

And it is a theme for thanksgiving to-day that, while other nations are receiving the terrible scourge; while upon almost a whole continent labor is suspended, or works only at the forge and the foundry, for purposes of destruction, throughout the length and breadth of this great land labor whistles, and sings, and is happy.

2. Again, the general aspect of wealth in America is such as to give occasion for thanksgiving to-day. The prodigious facilities for developing wealth are only just beginning to be perceived by the mass. The future fortunes of America will be fabulous. I suppose that there are to be fortunes on this continent, compared with which what were called fortunes once will seem like penury. The power of organizing seems to be almost the only limit. The wealth is here. It is easy to be developed. It is easy to be concentrated. It is growing easier every decade of years to be administered. And to be the owner of a million dollars will not make a man eligible to the class of rich men much longer. I look forward into that "golden" future, literally, which is opening before us, and marvel whether the most poetic dreams of growing wealth may not fall short of the reality. By and by there is to be a genius shown—there are yet to be reputations, and very noble reputations—for organizing and amassing wealth, compared with which we have had almost nothing in the past history of nations.

There are some who think that riches are always and only dangerous. Riches are dangerous simply because they are power; and all power is dangerous. Power is dangerous whether it be legislative or moral power. Even variety of influence is dangerous. And wealth is more dangerous than other forms simply because it is a more various power, and has certain facilities for adaptation and use which belong to almost no other power. But it is impossible to civilize a community without riches. I boldly affirm that no nation ever yet rose from a barbarous state except through the mediation of wealth earned. I affirm that the preaching of the Gospel to the heathen will be invalid and void if it does not make them active workmen, and teach them how to make money. And although the evidences of the conversion of the individual are not that he knows how to make money; yet in a nation no religion is a good religion that does not teach industry, and the thrift which comes from industry. For the law of communities is not analogous to the law of the individual. It is possible, in a great, rich, civilized community, for an individual man to be powerful, and preëminently so, and yet be poor; but no poor man can be of very great validity in a poor community. The community must be rich if he is to have power. It is the contrast, it is the self-denial, it is the moral efficiency without those other and external instrumentalities, that make him so marked, if he labors with voluntary poverty. But no *community* can develop into permanent civilization unless it has power ministered to it very largely through the civilizing influences of wealth. This alone will give the activity required; this alone will give the leisure in which men soften, and meliorate, and grow beautiful.

Now, the dangers of wealth in America are very great. They are even greater than we fear. Organized wealth is one great danger which lies ahead, looming up gigantically. And yet, wealth must be organized. The community will have to find ways in which to protect itself, however. If wealth be organized to do as it pleases, it becomes very dangerous. Nevertheless, organized wealth is yet to be a benefactor of the community to an extent that we have never suspected. It tends now to despotism; but it is because it is in the nascent stages.

Great corporations are dangerous. They do not need to be. Scores of millionaires organized together in concert to accomplish great ends need not be any more dangerous than the State is. There may be an empyrean of wealth; and it may be mischievous; but it does not need to be. At present it is so, and is to be watched against. Wealth tends to control all other power in society. Especially is it so in democratic societies, where we have no kings, no nobles, no fixed estate of honor, no titles, no positions which are permanent, and where wealth and character make the distinction, very largely, between man and man. Under such circumstances wealth tends to absorb into its own hands all the power in society. But it is not necessarily so. It is not necessary that riches should control courts and legislatures, and the franchise itself. It is not necessary that wealth, which owns the market, should also own the civil power, though it is a danger that is to be met and overcome. It tends to feed the lower nature; it tends to change refinement to luxury, and luxury to corruption; but it does not need to do this.

These are valid, imminent, pressing dangers, that never have been exaggerated; and yet they are not dangers which necessarily attend the accumulation and organization of great wealth in any community. It will require the vigilance of statesmen, and of philanthropists, and of good citizens, to guard against the dangers of wealth. But it is not philosophical to look only on the diseases of a community. It is wise to look at its hygienic qualities as well.

Is harm and danger, then, all that wealth is accomplishing in our midst? No. It is the almoner of employment, as it is the almoner of bread. It is the almoner of the family. It is the almoner of unnumbered households. It is the almoner of independence. And are we to forget that capital—that is, wealth in activity—with all its friction, is far safer than invested wealth, lying dead? It is money that is working that keeps bright, and it is money that is working that keeps men bright. Although working money is by various exigencies brought into circumstances where it must be limited, overruled, and curtailed, yet we are not to forget on this account that at the same

time it is that which is vivifying industry to the bottom of society, and that is carrying out on its broad hands and arms innumerable blessings to every part of the community. The very circulation of the community would cease, almost, the moment that wealth should cease to exist. It is the blood that carries nutrition into every part of the whole system.

Riches, therefore, may be said to be the poor man's providence, provided it is riches in use, and not invested. When men have retired from business, and their wealth is laid up, there is less danger from it; but there is less benefit from it at the same time. The dangers which we see threatening us are not less than real; but looking comprehensively at the general tendency of wealth in America, it is working in subordination to intelligence and to domestic virtue. There is a vast deal of ignorant using of wealth. A great many men use their property for ostentation; and a great many employ it for useless pride; and a great many use it for selfishness, and even for vice. But how to use money is an art just as much to be learned as how to make it. There are a great many men that know how to make money, who do not know how to use it; and there are a great many men that know how to spend money, who do not know how to make it. Both sides are to be learned. Neither comes by nature. There is art in it as much as there is in learning to paint, or to carve, or to fabricate at the blacksmith's forge, or at the joiner's bench. And men must not be expected to learn it in a generation. There are hundreds and thousands of men who began with literally nothing, and have ended with two or three hundred thousand dollars which they have to organize and commute into forms of civilization; and is it strange that a great many men do not know how to do it; that they sometimes build and furnish extravagantly and out of taste? My wonder is that there is so much taste and discretion exercised. For if you go through town after town, and village after village, and city after city, you will find that extravagant building and furnishing are the exception—not the rule. The rule is that wealth which has been earned wisely is being expended discreetly. I think that wealth to-day is being used more for building up American homes than for almost all other purposes. I think that the people live in better houses here than they do in any other country, the world over. I am sure they do. Men of the same rank in life, of the same professions, and of the same conditions of wealth, live in better houses, more amply stored, and with more conveniences, here than anywhere else. There is more ingenuity in the construction of houses here—and it requires more ingenuity to keep them constructed!—than in any other land on the globe.

Nowhere else will you find so many homes that are filled with elegance. Nor are we to suppose that all the elegance goes with the city and the town. You shall hear the sound of the piano in every cluster of three houses throughout the land, almost, from ocean to ocean. And if there is anything in this world that is a luxury, it is an instrument of music. You cannot eat it; you cannot take it for medicine; you cannot sell it—generally; it has none of those ear-marks which men attach to other property; and yet there is almost nothing else which men so much covet everywhere. The carpenter, the black-smith, the farmer, if he has a daughter, wants an instrument of music. And it has ceased to be considered extravagant. The statistics of the piano-manufacturers of America (and they are not all in New York, nor in Boston, nor in Baltimore, nor in Philadelphia: go back into the inland villages, go into some mid-county of the State of New York, and you shall find there rising before your sight, never heard of before, a factory of pianos, that sells its hundreds and thousands of pianos every year, though it would seem as though there were more thousands made in this city than could be bought by all the world put together)—the statistics of the manufacturers of that one single item epitomize the extent of the home comfort and elegance to which the people of America have attained. It is remarkable. There is no land on earth where individual men earn so much money as in America. I suppose that the money-producing force in our country is greater than that of any other people (—a hint to tax-payers!) Not only that, but this money-producing power is accompanied by a greater power to use money for the furtherance of home purposes here than anywhere else. For land is so cheap that it is hardly considered treasure in the same sense that it is in Europe, where it is almost impossible to get it, and where to own land, as in England, is almost to have a title, there being but some twenty-five thousand land owners in all Great Britain. But in America land is so cheap that it is no sign that a man is wealthy because he owns land—oftentimes the contrary!

People, therefore, in the administration of wealth, accumulate not so much great estates as houses, and well-furnished houses. Is it a strange thing to go into a workingman's house, and to find his five hundred volumes? It is less frequent than it should be, but it is not at all strange. Is it strange to find in the houses of plain laborers magnificent libraries? Old Dowse of Cambridge, a tanner and currier all his life, bears witness. He had one of the finest libraries in all Massachusetts. It was composed of the choicest books, admirably selected, and finely bound; and they were books that he read, too. Cambridge was to have had it, but some of the people there saw fit to

insult him because he was a tanner and currier, and so he slipped by them, and gave it to the Historical Society, or some other institution, in Boston; and there it is; and when I want to go on a pilgrimage, and cannot go to Mecca nor to Jerusalem, I go there to see the tanner and currier's library.

It is not strange to find a man who works at the forge all day, grim and grizzly, going home at night to pursue historical reading. I know farmers that I should dislike to meet in an argument (unless I was on the same side with them!) And they are not cases here and there, selected. It is characteristic of our working people, and of men that are well to do, that they are growing up to make the town in which they live beautiful and intelligent. Their houses themselves are often models of taste and convenience, and are setting examples which one by one the neighbors follow. And so, in the train of industry comes wealth, and of wealth, taste, and of taste, beneficence; and refinement flashes throughout the land. And when I hear men speaking bitterly against wealth, I notice that almost invariably they are men who have not got it. When I hear them deride moneyed men, moneyed kings, moneyed princes, it seems to me that they have not well considered the facts. They only think of here and there, it may be, a Crœsus. But if you follow the more moderate fortunes; if you look into the whole career of money in this land, not the Nile, when it comes down with its annual freshet and distributes the slime which is the riches of Egypt over the circumjacent territory, is so great a blessing to Egypt, as is the great diffusion of wealth in this country to America. And nowhere else does wealth so directly point towards virtue in morality, and spirituality in religion, as in America.

So then, I am not afraid to rejoice. Get rich, if you can. Pay anything for riches. Anything? Yes, pay yourself; pay weariness; pay head-cracking thought; pay anything but this—do not pay your honor, nor your affection, nor your simplicity, nor your faith in man, nor your love to God. But whatever you can take out of the body, pay. And when you shall have amassed wealth, it will be God's power, if you are wise to use it, by which you can make your home happier, the community more refined, and the whole land more civilized.

Wealth in America, also, is public-spirited (I thought I had got through; but I find two or three more heads). The classes that are amassing money furnish a large proportion of all the funds by which the active charities of society are carried on. The buildings which decorate our community are from the hands, mostly, of wealthy men. Architecture is the adopted child of wealth. The fine arts could scarcely exist but for the interposition of wealth. The universities,

and academies, and colleges, and public libraries, and reading rooms, and halls for lectures, are the fruit of liberal wealth in America. Cornell, Vassar, Cooper, Williston, Lawrence, and a hundred others, are significant American names. And there are more coming forward, who yet will not simply be known by their money among those that love them, but whose names will become symbolic of some great public charity, or some great public spirit.

Wealth is searching out the neglected classes; is distributing from our cities vagabond children; is opening schools for the laboring classes, to teach them all mechanic arts. I may safely say that no public need can be wisely presented to the wealth of America, and not be liberally, and at times munificently, taken care of. In other lands, governments give much for public institutions; but in America the great bulk of the means required to build up the institutions of civilization, and to support them, is contributed by the people, and by the business men of the people.

Wealth, then, like its owners, has its devil and its temptation; it has its mistakes and perversions; it has its great dangers to society; but its blessings are a hundred-fold. And, on the whole, the general tendency of wealth is such as to lead me to-day to thank God for the increasing wealth of America. May it ever be sanctified. May it ever learn nobler uses, and aspire higher and higher, until the symbolism of the heavenly state, where the very streets are paved with gold, shall be reproduced in the realities and actualities of our life here on earth.

3. I meant to speak of the cause of education, and the reasons for thanksgiving in that direction; and also of the progress of civilization, and all forms of refinement. I can, however, not even mention them, in detail. I only, in closing, shall speak of the religious condition of the land, as a grand reason for thanksgiving.

4. There are many signs, which, if taken alone, will distress the mind, and so distress many timid souls. Such is the prevalence of scientific scepticism, such is the subversion of old landmarks, and the setting aside of cherished beliefs, and the letting go of old systems, and the coming in of violent actions and reactions of men that have drunk new wine (for truth is intoxicating to men whose heads are not strong), that there is an impression that religion is losing ground; that it is becoming an old story—a superstition. But this scene is enacted every three or four hundred years; and religion comes up every time stronger and stronger. I think religion is like the grass of the meadow, which, when burnt over, lies black and charred, but the ashes of which are a stimulating manure, which afterwards fosters a growth that is stronger than that to which the violence was done. And my faith in religion is not in the church, and not in doctrines, and not in books,

and not in ministers, nor in anything external to man, but in that nature which God created, and which makes religion indispensable to man. Until man himself dies, there will be a faith, and that faith will fashion to itself both beliefs and services of devotion.

On the other hand, there was never, probably, so intelligent a faith as there is to-day, in so many men. Never were there so many men who thought so much on the subject of religion, and read so much, and argued so much, and looked so far into the themes of their belief as to-day. Not among the educated classes alone, but among plain people of the country, I think there is more reading, and more thinking, and more real heart-interest in religion than ever before.

Then there is a drawing together, a more kindred feeling, which is taking the place of the rancor and sectarian bitterness which prevailed not a great while ago, in many directions.

And it is very noticeable that the different sects of religion are softening, and that men are coming together in conference who only a few years ago thought it their duty to hate and club one another. This growing spirit of love and fellowship in differing churches is one of the signs of the growth of religion.

Religious ethics, also, are more widely diffused. Though there may not be in the general mind as much belief in doctrinal religion as there once was, there is more belief in the ethics of religion than there was ever before. The standards of belief that are set up by the word of God are more universally accepted and applied to-day than formerly they were. Governments conform to the Christian spirit more than ever they did before. Jurisprudence seeks to measure itself more than ever according to the equity that was in Christ Jesus. The heart is regulating itself more by those great laws of simplicity and truth and righteousness, or justice, if I may so say, than ever before. And even business is seeking, among all its contortions, to cast the devil of dishonesty out of itself. I think business never before acknowledged so high a standard as it does to-day. And while the belief in creeds and formularies may have changed, the belief in ethical standards of religion was never so universally employed as to-day.

And humanity—which is sympathy for man in his sorrow and in his need—when was there ever so much of it? When, in any age of the world since Christ was lifted up on Calvary, has such a scene been presented as to-day is witnessed, when France is humbled? My heart is sore for her. And though I know that the wheat before it is bread must be ground; and though I believe in the loaf, yet, when the wheat is living men, I cannot bear to see the grinding. To-day, one vast nation is treading another vast nation under foot; and all the out-lying world around—England, with all her dependencies, Germany

itself, America, Italy, and all the other nations—by bazars, by fairs, by collections in churches, and by contributions of public-spirited men, is pouring out a tide of wealth to relieve the sufferers. And if war must be, humanity stands by to bind up the wounds that war makes. When before was there such a looking-on, such a spectatorship? In regard to the inhuman wars of the world, humanity was never so widespread. Never was there such sensibility among the nations of the earth as there is to-day. A benevolent or cordial and coöperative kindness in the upbuilding of society never was wider than to-day. And faith in God—not perhaps according to your definition nor according to mine, but faith in an overruling power; faith in an unerring wisdom; faith in a goodness which is paternal; faith in One who looks upon the whole human race as his family, and not as a despot looks upon his subjects; faith that leads men to see roseate colors in the heaven, and not crushing bolts; faith in God, as the almighty good, was never stronger, and never was growing so fast, nor so deep.

Here, then, is our survey. Our territorial condition is prosperous. Our material prosperity is eminent, and it is tending upward rather than downward. Our labor and our laborers are prospering; and they are working upward. Wealth, with all its tendencies, on the whole, is on the line of development toward moral and not toward physical things. Education is widely prevalent, and is taking in more perfectly every class. Refinement is becoming the indispensable element of all prosperity. Religion itself, though losing many of its antique forms and services, as a spirit and as a controlling influence, was never so strong. I thank God for all the signs of the times. I thank God for the health and for the prosperity of the nation.

And now, I have but one word to say more: as we have been put in the van among nations to develop principles in their practical forms that were only known as seed-corn in other lands, my heart's ambition is, first, for the welfare of this whole land, for the sake of the burden of the population which it carries. God bless America. Not because I was born in it; not because it is my America, and because I receive the reflection of its glory, and a dividend of its power. I am not insensible to these things; yet not on those accounts that are personal to me do I implore God's blessing upon America; but because this continent carries such a burden of humanity that its weal or woe will be like an eternal weal or woe, infinite, endless. May God, for the sake of neighboring peoples, bless this land. And as God is making us wise, and rich, and strong, and expert, and fearless, may He take the lion and the bear out of our nature, and give us the spirit of the dove, that we may stand frowning on our shores against no foreign people; that we may be no

band of robbers to filch and to steal from the feeble and the poor. May God give us magnanimity and power and riches, that we may throw the shadow of our example upon the poor, the perishing, and the ready-to-be-destroyed, for their protection. And cursed—cursed of God, and of men cursed—be that man who counsels the red right hand of war except when it is needful to fight for our own existence! We have no war that we want to wage except the war of righteousness in ourselves. It is not for us to bombard and destroy other nations, and to follow the vices of tyrannies. What is the use of the reign of the common people, where is the glory of democracy, if it can but ape, and with greater cruelty, the mischiefs of despotism? Let kings war; let aristocrats war; but the common people of a great republic should own the brotherhood of man. And, instead of raising aloft the red hand, let them throw the nursing arm of protection around about their neighbors, and call all men their brethren, and dwell together in fealty, in unity, in sympathy, and in happiness.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Almighty God, we thank thee for the promise which thou hast made unto the Church, and for all the glory of that latter-day which, far away and dim, hangs like a golden haze above the future. We rejoice to believe that men shall not forever debase themselves; that the time shall come when the name of God shall be beloved of all men, and when that love which prevails in heaven shall flow through all the earth, and war be heard no more, and nations vex each other no longer; and when peace and righteousness shall prevail everywhere. We thank thee, O Lord! that we see some of the blessed signs and tokens of this coming glory. Not that it is already established; for men do hate. Men destroy thy heritage, and deface thine image, yet. The power of the lower life is greater than the power of the spiritual life. But we behold on every side the signs and the tokens of spring; not fruits yet, nor even flowers, but the buds, are apparent. And we rejoice to believe that the time shall assuredly come, and that we shall behold it from the other land if not from this, when all the earth shall see thy salvation.

And now, we pray that we may labor in our day and generation for the fulfillment of thy righteous will in our own nation. We thank thee that thou hast given us our breath and our life in this goodly land. We thank thee for all the privileges which we have—all that are natural, and all that are derived from the wise laws and institutions of our fathers. We thank thee for the path through which thou hast led us, growing brighter and brighter, and more and more beneficent. Thou hast ordained a place for this people's march; and though at times thou hast chastised us, and passed us through the fiery furnace, yet it has been for good. And thou that hast ordained war hast ordained peace, and with peace four-fold prosperity.

We thank thee especially for the mercies of the year that has gone; that the husbandman has sown his seed in hope, that his hope has not been

disappointed, and that the harvest has more than fulfilled the expectation of sowing.

We thank thee for the abundance which now gives so much to the need of those who are poor and are feeble. We thank thee for the open hand and the bounty of those that have to spare. And we beseech of thee that throughout all our land there may be given to this people a larger heart, and a feeling of sincere sympathy and of true brotherhood. We thank thee that thou hast given us rest within our borders during the past year; that all the interests of society have been peacefully pursued; that schools have prospered; that colleges have thriven; that churches have been founded, or have been built up; that the word of life has been preached with power from on high.

We thank thee for all the household happiness which has been vouchsafed to us. Our lives have been spared. Thou hast been gracious unto our children. Thou hast multiplied our mercies. Thy judgments have been few, and they have been tempered with very great goodness.

We thank thee for our personal experience; for all the hopes that we have. And now we desire, as in our own homes separately, and in our own hearts, so collectively and together, to give thanksgiving and praise to thee for all the year, and all thy varied manifestations therein. We commend our households, and our state, and this nation, to thy care for the years that are yet to come. Lord God of our fathers, yet be the guide of this people. Be thou their judge and their lawgiver. And we pray that great things may yet be done by this people, for peace, for happiness, for the whole world's regeneration. Let thy kingdom, long predicted, begin to come—that kingdom in which dwelleth righteousness. Oh! let us hear the footsteps, not of one who shall tread down nations in his wrath, but of Him of the pierced feet. Grant, O Lord! that his coming may be speedy, with all the signs of power and of glory. And let the whole earth see his salvation.

And now accept, we beseech of thee, the service which we offer up to thee,—our prayers, our praises, all the services of instruction. May we rejoice before thee in the hours of this day that yet remain; and may our hearts be glad in the blessing of our God. And when all these earthly experiences are past, be pleased to give us an exceeding and abundant entrance into the joys of thine other land, where we will praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, forever more. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, wilt thou grant thy blessing to rest upon the word spoken. Grant that our hopes, and our courage, and our aspirations, and our yearnings for the future, may not be in vain. Accept our humble acknowledgments of our unworthiness; our acknowledgements of thy great mercy to our forefathers, and to us their posterity. And as thou hast guided us by thy law and counsel hitherto, so continue to guide this great nation, making it greater—making it great for goodness; great for purity; great for the prosperity of men. And may we live to see it a nation not only peaceful, but breathing the spirit of peace through all the disturbed nations of the earth. Hasten the day when, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, all nations shall know thee and fear thee. We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

THE HIGHER SPIRITUAL LIFE.

"And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee; and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagognes, being glorified of all."—Luke iv., 14, 15.

Of the whole early period of Christ's life—his human life—until his baptism, there is no record of the exertion of special power, or even of any considerable influence. For some twenty-seven years, it was a life of seclusion; and whatever may have been the developments of it, there is no record made. His childhood is set out briefly. He reappears once, going with his parents to Jerusalem to the feast, when he is twelve years of age. Then he disappears; and he does not appear again until he is twenty-seven years of age. And during that whole time, there is almost no disclosure of his power.

A time came, when the veil seemed to be removed. His baptism and his temptation in the wilderness were past. He went back for a month or two to Galilee, after these experiences, and then returned again to Jerusalem, to one of the great feasts. At this time it was that he drove out the money-changers and the traffickers from the temple, and cleansed it. Staying but a short time, he returned to Galilee by way of Samaria. And it is after he has left Samaria behind him, that this record comes in. He returns to Galilee *in the power of the Spirit.*

Here began, really, the active period of his ministry, which was compressed into a very little more than twelve months. For, although three years are usually assigned to Christ as the period of his ministry, the active period of it was but very little over twelve months—and those the last of his earthly life. There are strange periods in which he is hidden from the sight. In making out a strict chronological view of the public life of Christ, you will find that one month, two months, three months are dropped out and lost sight of; that there is a continuous account of him during only the last twelve months of his life; and that in this period almost all his miracles were performed, and almost all his discourses were delivered. This is the period that followed imme-

SUNDAY MORNING, Nov. 27, 1870. LESSON: ACTS II. 1-42. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 23, 430, 472.

diately after the statement,—*And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit.*

It is at this point, then, that there was an extraordinary disclosure of the nature and power of Christ. That he had been godly, and that he had exerted moral force, before this, none doubt. That he had in a consecrated spirit successfully entered upon his life-work before this special disclosure, there can be no question. But there came a point at which his spirit was gradually enlarged. There was a new liberty that he experienced. There came upon him an impulse higher and more fruitful than he had ever known before. An influence pervaded him which not only transcended that of his ordinary former condition, but was well nigh irresistible, and carried everything for a time before it, and rolled up the community in waves of excitement as a wind rolls up the waves of the sea. For we have no adequate conception of the degree of excitement that was produced by the first nine or ten months of Christ's ministry in Galilee. All classes felt his personal presence. There scarcely could be developed an open opposition to him. *He was glorified by all*, is the record. And this continued very much to the end of his life.

Here, then, was an ordinary condition in the beginning; then an exaltation into a higher condition of power, which afterwards remained permanent with him. It seemed not so much like new elements of power, as the clothing of former elements with a greater scope and influence. It was not so much that Christ seemed different from what he did before, as that there was more of him of the same kind; and that it was more irresistible. The tenor of his discourses before he returned with the power of the Spirit on him, was substantially the same as the tenor of his after discourses. But the effect was not the same; and the Scripture speaks of this as the result of the divine Spirit resting upon him.

Now, this is full of interest in every way in which you can look at it: First, as bringing up the question of Christ's divinity. Can One who is divine receive augmented powers? Especially can he from another co-equal Spirit receive augmentation? To this inquiry it may be replied that Christ's life on earth was divine. It was God manifest in or through the flesh. It was the divine circumscribed. It was not in its own full estate, but humbled, environed by laws through the flesh. It restricted, hindered, and at times seemed well-nigh to eclipse the development, the outshining of the divine nature that was within. Therefore he was subject to the same natural law, to the same law of growth and gradual development, and to the same helps that men are. He was a man in all conditions; and his experience partook, step by step, of that universal experience of man which does not imply sin, but

only limitation or weakness. It indicates also the elaboration of latent power. This power of the Spirit that rested upon Christ seemed to sit over that which was in him before. It brought forth no new elements, but it brought out the divine element that existed previously. It was as the sun, which is not created nor augmented, but which, when the clouds are driven away from his face, shines with a power that he did not before have. This elaboration and enfranchisement of power was the result of spiritual influence from above. It was prefigured at his baptism by the descent of the Holy Spirit like a dove resting upon him. It was realized in part from that time; but in full it was disclosed at only about the beginning of the last year of his ministry. In consequence of this, he performed more work, he exerted more influence, in these twelve months than in the whole of his foregoing life.

Interesting as a study in the life of Christ, it becomes even more so in its connections with ourselves—with the whole sphere and operation and possibilities of the human mind. For a like experience will be traced in the apostles' lives. Their call and adhesion to Christ was to take a very low moral state. One is led to marvel, in reading the account of the gathering of Christ's disciples, why he selected such men, from such quarters, and such regions. Nor do I think that we can give any distinct answer to this. In many obvious respects there were men superior to them in Palestine, who might have been had at his beck. Nor do I understand, nor think that I understand, from the words of Scripture which are recorded concerning them, why he first selected the particular kind of men that he did, to be his companions and disciples. But I can see that they were afterwards fitted for their mission by their ultimate susceptibility to the disclosures of the Spirit, which is a very different thing from the mere possession of present talent, or mere moral cultivation. It is evident that he selected them, not for the hours in which he was to be with them, but for their after-work, which, when the Spirit should have descended upon them like a dove, they were to perform.

Nor did the example of his teaching, during the time of his sojourn, remove from them their Jewish prejudices, nor in any way induct them into the spirit or truth of Christ. At the time of his death the disciples were but very little advanced, if any, except in their personal affection for him, beyond Nicodemus, or other devout and spiritual-minded Jews, though they had companied with him.

After his resurrection he did not send them out upon their mission immediately. There was something yet waited for and wanting. He commanded them to wait in Jerusalem for the Spirit. If you will turn to the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke, you will find this stated emphatically:

"Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

This becomes very significant when it is taken in connection with the history of Christ himself, which I have just been passing over.

A longer account of this is given in the first chapter of Acts:

"And being assembled together with them, Jesus commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put in his own power. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

You will observe, then, that after their instruction, and their residence with Christ, and after his death and resurrection, he did not regard them as qualified to go forth as disciples, but told them to stay in Jerusalem until some other great change should come upon them. And he declared what that change should be—*power from on high; the power of the Holy Ghost.*

And then came the pentecostal experience which I have read as the opening service of this morning. The result of this was that these men were transformed. There seemed to rest upon them, under circumstances of great impressiveness, a sign of internal, divine power. And from that moment they were changed, so that every one feels that they were different from what they had been before. We regard them as having been good men before, though they were very ordinary men, with all human weaknesses; but from this hour the disciples rose up to the magnitude of extraordinary men. Wherever they went, they were endowed with a power from on high; from before each obstacles disappeared; and they became chiefs and princes among men, and to a degree that you cannot account for by any natural faculties or natural endowments, nor any education, nor any advantageous circumstances into which they were thrown. And this change was preëminent; and it transformed their characters by heightening every virtue, and by lowering every defect. It gave them a power over other men, both of speech and action, of which there was no suspicion up to this time.

So, then, these two facts stand apparent on the threshold: First, that our Saviour remained, as it were, a long time in a probationary state, and entered upon his ministry at last in the power of the Spirit; and second, that after he had finished his career, and was about to ascend to heaven, he told his disciples not to enter at once upon their life-work, but to wait: they were to wait for the same thing,

namely, The Holy Ghost. At last it descended in an appointed though unexpected way. And they were clothed, as Christ before them had been, with a new energy, a new efficiency; and they went out into their life-work through that blazing portal of the Holy Ghost.

But did these spiritual dynamics stop with the apostles? Were they special to the Master, and to his immediate servants? Or were they regarded as a part of universal Christian experience? That is the question that connects it with us. Was this effluence of the Divine Spirit, and this exaltation of the whole nature, something apostolic and official, designed for their especial work; or was it universal, and as much designed for you and for me as for them?

We are not left in doubt as to what they themselves thought on this matter. Peter said, at the day of Pentecost, immediately after they came under this new power,

"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Speaking under its first influence himself, he by implication declared it to be nothing special to himself. He declared that it was the common experience to be expected among Christians. And that afterwards it was general, we are not left in any doubt:

"And it came to pass, that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus; and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?"

You perceive that the acts of believing and adhesion to Christ were one thing; and he expected that it would be followed by a great disclosure of spiritual force in them. So he asked them,

"Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? and they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost."

Men were taken to be Christians without being very orthodox in those days. It was not considered that doctrinal knowledge was so indispensable to the evidence of the work of God on the soul.

"And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism."

And yet they were disciples, and were consorting with the Christian disciples.

"Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve."

Another scene shows a similar work:

"Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John; who, when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy

Ghost: (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost."

You will observe that this was not a clandestine, nor a merely interior and imaginative result, but that the laying on of the apostles' hands and the descent of the Holy Spirit was so open and so obvious that a sorcerer, regarding it as one step in the occult science, one degree in the direction of the black art, was content to offer and pay the customary fee, whatever it was, that he might take that step.

I do not pause to speak of the moral aspects of this, but simply to call your attention to the fact that as Christ himself returned with the power of the Holy Spirit to Galilee; and as, at the Pentecost, they made the offer of it to all disciples; so we find traces in the early Church which go to show that when they became Christians, and the apostles laid their hands upon them, they received this special power over and above mere ordinary endowments, so that men saw it, and coveted it, and tried to buy it:—I call your attention to these facts as disclosing a great interior economy in Christianity, which is too much neglected in modern times.

In every age, I remark again, there have been those to whom these disclosures have been made. Eminent moral natures have long wrought righteousness, and yet come to the period in which suddenly they have been taken up into a larger liberty, into a sphere of greater power, into a condition of spiritual influence, of which their past life afforded no sort of intimation. This was preëminently the case with John Wesley, who labored years and years, as he regarded it, in bondage; and who at last came out into the power of the Spirit. It was the case of a great many men in the Roman Church, in its earlier days. Perhaps it may be so still; for I believe there are a great many preeminently divine natures in that church. It has been so in all churches. Here and there, there have been men who have gone through precisely this experience. Not only so, there have been periods in which the whole Church at large seems to have been caught up out of a lower sphere, to have been inspired and lifted into an unusual region of spiritual influence, and to have continued there, and to have exerted a power which, for generations before, had failed from the earth.

Lastly, many are now living, and are distinctly conscious that this same impulse and this same clothing of extraordinary power remain on earth. There be many who have been carried from a very low state of obedience and of faith and of hope up into a condition of great joy, and of great affluence, and of great influence.

Here is the brief concatenation of facts, as they stand connected with this peculiar and extraordinary influence of the Divine Spirit upon the human soul; and in view of it, I remark, first, that while God employs all men's ordinary faculties, and in their ordinary states, in the degree of power which they attain under the stimulation of society and of material things in nature, there is in reserve a region of life in the soul, and of experience, transcending immeasurably ordinary life, in exaltation, in happiness, and in capacity of power. It is not to be supposed that the ordinary, or what is generally called the normal condition of men in their earthly state is unnatural or useless. God employs it; but it is so much lower than what man is competent to experience, that he who has had only the inspiration which comes through natural material laws developed on the globe, or developed in society, among social instructions and material inspirations or stimulations, does not know what he is; does not understand what is the power held in reserve in his own nature. For there is a capacity of unfolding, there is a nature that inspiration can bring out, which so transcends the ordinary developments that every faculty has a reach that you have no suspicion of.

If an ignorant man had a present of a telescope, and, ignorantly taking it up, he should open the eye-piece and the object glass to look through it, and see, if at all, only in a blurred way, he would think perhaps because he had been told so, that it was a very valuable and curious instrument; but how little would he know of it, until, under instruction, he had drawn it out joint by joint to the true focus, and then put his eye to the glass! And what a horizon could he now sweep! How different would the glass be to him from what it was before!

Men's faculties are telescopic. Used in their lower state, they are, as it were, undrawn out. They are capable of being brought to a condition in which they will be a hundred times more than they are in their ordinary and spiritually undeveloped condition. It is the proper state of the Christian to rise higher than this common, ordinary, and, if you please so to call it, normal state of faculty.

The consciousness of this transcends all other evidences of the divine life. While some men are perpetually seeking to measure themselves, to know whether they are in the faith, there are those all around about them who scarcely ever propose the question to themselves. For they are lifted up into that region of moral consciousness which abounds and superabounds with the evidence that they are the Lord's.

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.
"He endured as seeing Him who is invisible."

There are those who are no more doubtful of their estate than they

are of the shining of the sun; and their evidences are not obscured by any obliquity of their orbit, or jar, or intermission. On the whole, they abide in a state of moral inspiration which is its own evidence, compared with which no other evidence can be mentioned. And out of this comes a facility for work which shows it to be the normal though the ideal and teleologic condition of men's higher nature. How many such Christians there are, God only knows. It is, however, enough for us to be sure that this is possible; that, as in the case of the master, He rose to a nobler disclosure than that which belonged to the earlier life; that as the apostles rose into a sphere of glorious influence; that as the early disciples were brought through the gate of repentance into faith, and then through faith into the blaze of a later experience, which was called the power of the Holy Ghost upon them; as in every age since men have found that when they began their Christian life and were working in a spiritual morality they had only begun, and that there was something yet higher and yet more joyful and yet more blessed above; as there are still among us in all churches, God be thanked, here and there, instances of these natures that have blossomed into higher life; and as all these things are brought to us not as evidences of prerogative, nor of special favor, but simply as specimens of what is the power of the human soul in the divine nature, they become immensely influential, both upon the imagination and upon the reason, and ought to be influential upon the life, as well. For the noblest part of men's nature, if this be true, is not developed—or is only very feebly developed.

We see that men live all their life long without developing the skill that is in the hand. There has been many and many a man who was competent to be an artist, but who died without a single work. It was an undeveloped talent. There has been many and many a great mathematician who has done nothing, either that he was conscious of, or that was apparent to others. He had a power, but it was undeveloped. The reason, not only of individuals, but of generations of men, has been undeveloped. There have been great gifts of power treasured up in every age, and in all directions, which have never come to the light. And so it is still. Not one in a million of those who have great natural power, comes to it in this life. Men are as tropical trees are in northern climes. The summer is too short, and the sun is too cold, and the soil is too shallow for them. And though they grow for a time, they must be taken up and housed in winter, and set out again in summer. And the flower, the fruit, and especially the full stature, is never to be seen except in their own native clime.

Now, men are living in this world; and they might in one way or another be educated a great deal more highly than they are; but that

is not the whole of what I mean. I mean that while you may increase and strengthen by normal methods the ordinary faculties, there is a point at which the soul may break through into an absolutely different sphere; or its moral faculties may be so inflamed with a heavenly power that this addition may transform the whole nature of the man, and give to all his other faculties influences and potencies such as would not otherwise be suspected. We are living out of ourselves, under ourselves, without ourselves; and no man has in him the power to develop his strongest, his divinest self. And that is the thing which I believe Christ meant when he said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." There is a power of a man's nature whose inflammation requires the direct fire of the Holy Spirit of God. But when that lapses and falls upon men, it does kindle in them an enthusiasm, an exaltation, an intuition, a spirit of prophesy, and a spirit of power, which in some natures goes toward the miraculous—and I do not know but it goes *to* it in our day just as much as in the older days; for I believe that the upper nature of man is powerful over the lower one, and that a miracle is nothing but the supremacy of spiritual forces acting upon natural forces. It is not against the course of nature; it is the regulation of nature; and it is the order of nature that the higher should control the lower, and that the divine should always control the physical and material. And I do not know why there should not be miracles to-day just as much as there were in the apostles' times, except for the fact that the comparative irregularities of miraculous development are not so much needed, as society grows up with regular instruments and into regular processes. As respects the abstract question, I do not know why there might not be miracles in the church to-day, and why those who are inspired of God might not have just the same potency over the mountain and over the tree as when Christ said, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove." And before the final pentecost comes, I believe there will be works which will be equivalent to the primitive miracles in the Christian Church.

I remark, again, that even when among Christians one's life is quickened, it is not ripened, ordinarily. We come to the twilight; but how few of us ever come to the sunlight—to the light of the Sun of Righteousness! We come a certain way along; but how few there are who are taught, or who try to reach, or who, without trying, stumble upon that higher life! When it comes to men, how seldom does it come because they read it in the word of God, and see that it is their privilege! These experiences are almost always found out just as mines of gold are discovered. Men pull up a shrub or a root and see the shining sand, and

look, and find that there is gold there! They did not think there was gold there, but discovering traces of it by accident, they go and search for it, and find it. So in building a mill-race, the modern discovery of gold in California was made. And among Christians, of those who have this wonderful power of the Spirit of God resting upon them, some found it in prisons, not expecting to find it there; and some found it after long sickness. Driven from step to step, and quickened, and instructed and exalted, they have found it at last at the end of a long disciplinary course. Sometimes men have found it in health and power while working among their fellow men, held on from step to step, risen higher and higher, and at last broken out into it. Sometimes men have found it in the midst of great revivals of religion, when, under circumstances of universal quickening, their natures, in sympathy with the divine nature, were caught, and were carried up into the fullness of this state.

Alas! that men should come to it, if I may so say, by these divine accidents; that they should find it accidentally; that it should not be understood that this is the apparatus of every man's soul; that every man should not point his Christian experience right toward it, and feel it, and live in it by the power of the Holy Ghost; that he should not double and quadruple his power, that he may become victorious both over himself and the world that is round about him. It belongs to the divinity of the mind. It is susceptible of being united again to the nature of God, of which it partakes. It is the mind's power of holy inflammation; it is its power of luminousness; it is its power of interpretation, precision, intuition. It is a part of the mind. It is not anything abnormal. It is unusual; it is ulterior, it comes last, and is least frequently found; but it belongs to the mind just as much as the body belongs to our existence here. And it is the right of everybody to have it, and to seek for it. Some will find it by shorter ways than others. It is with this as with all talents, which are differently measured out to men. And so this capacity of inward spiritual exaltation, this, if I may so call it, divine constitution, varies in quantity and power in different persons. But I believe that it inheres in all. There is no man who may not live by faith—that is, by the invisible sense of things—not by sight; not by outward law; not by scientific rules.

I remark, once more, that the working-power of Christians, while it includes knowledge, and tact, and ordinary social influence, and the various moral machinery of instruction and organization; the working-power of Christians, while it includes the money-power and knowledge-power of this world, yet has distinctively power in another direction. For all these outward elements of power the unconverted man can wield as well as we. That which is distinctive in Christian working

is the power of the Holy Ghost. Or rather, it is the working of a man's mind after it has been educated and enlightened by the Holy Ghost. That condition of soul which brings out the new force, and which makes it a mirror held up to God, with the power of reflecting back upon the sight of men the divine image and the divine nature—that is the power by which men are to transcend all ordinary experiences, and perform marvelous works. And I think that if you compare the fruitfulness of one with another, while something may be due to superior activity, and something to ordinary worldly causations, yet there be multitudes of men whose usefulness cannot be accounted for on any other principle than that they have received this gift of the Holy Ghost, and that this gift makes more of them than is made of men who are ten times their superiors in natural endowments.

There was no great natural capacity in Harlan Page; and yet he was an apostle; and his life has quickened the lives of tens of thousands since he has been gone. Being dead, he yet speaks. But he had the Holy Ghost rising upon him. There are men who say but little; and yet they give you a new ideal. They shine as stars in the heavens. And there can be no accounting for it, except on the ground of the dynamic influence of spiritual life and spiritual power in this world. There are men who stand in the center of circles, and all rise up and call them blessed; and nobody can tell why, except that they bring heaven near, and bring invisible things near, and gain faith, and strengthen their moral tendencies, and see God, and have the power to reflect what they see, upon other persons.

It is these men who have the higher region of their soul enlightened by the spirit of God, that do the most for other men; that set aside skepticism; that convince the unconvinced; that penetrate the unconverted through with a new and eternal sense, both of their lacks, and of their possibilities and hopes. It is these men who are joined together, and who receive their power of life and of working from God, that, after all, are the lights of the world.

Once more. If these things be true (and I know not how we shall set them aside), we see what is the direction in which every one should seek to stand pure. We are not to neglect all ordinary causes. They are to be heeded. But there is to be something in superaddition to all the ordinary laws of wisdom and experience. The heart is to be cleansed, vivified, intensified, augmented, made irresistible, by the indwelling of the divine Spirit. And this is the reason why, when men begin to call on God, they are led of God to pray for the descent of that Spirit in which is their life, and in which is their hope. This is the reason why, when God comes to communities and churches, one of the first signs and tokens of a genuine work of grace in any heart,

or in any church, or in any community, is that men begin to feel their alienation from God. How weak is all their natural power! They begin to hunger and thirst after this divine illumination. This is why, when the Spirit of God falls on communities, and they are revived, there is such light and joy. For there is no state of such liberty and no state of such intense satisfaction as that in which churches, kindled and rejoicing in the ingathering of souls, are mingling together in spiritual communion. And under the conscious blessing and in the full inspiration of the household, it is the source of light, it is the source of joy, it is the source of power, and it is the indispensable instrument of victory.

Christian brethren, many of you are longing for the renewal of life. Many of you are laboring and are praying for it. Here is the instrument of your power. This is what you need; this is what we all need —that higher life which comes by the Spirit of God.

To this one point, then, let every one of us concentrate thought, and will, and earnest prayer. For God is more willing to give us of his Spirit than parents are to give bread to their children that ask it. And that we do not have it in larger measure is not because he withholds it, but because, while it is shining broadly as the sun, we are clouded, and are shut up, and the light that is sent abroad through all the churches shines upon us, and the darkness comprehends it not. If you would be clothed with new experiences, and would rejoice with new life in your households; if with all your cares and burdens you would have power given you to bear them with transcendent joy and resignation, find that power by enkindling in your souls a higher sphere of thought, and and a nobler experience. Rise into the communion of the Holy Ghost; into the communion of the unseen world; into the realization of the life to come; into the power of God. Then you shall come forth rejoicing, powerful beyond any former measure of things; and at death you shall pass from glory to glory.

May God grant to us all this sweetest, this divinest gift, the power of the Spirit.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, we draw near to thee, encouraged by thy words of grace and of mercy. We remember the multitude that have trusted in thy name in days gone by, and have been rescued and comforted, and made victorious, at last, over time and the world, and are at rest. We remember our own experiences. How often thou hast brought us succor and consolation! And all our life is a testimony to thy goodness. For, although we have not plucked the best fruits that are within our reach, yet we have been nourished, we have been sustained by thy grace, more than we have reason to think. Thou hast done exceeding abundantly more for us than we have asked or thought. Thou hast not restrained thy mercy by the measure of our petition. Thou hast not merely filled that which we have asked to be filled, but thou hast given overflowing measure. Thy paths drop fatness. Wherever thou dost walk, thou leavest on the way tokens of thine abundance, thine overflowing mercy. And thy goodness is our hope. For we are ourselves of the earth, earthy, constricted by selfishness, intemperate by reason of pride, and full yet of the lower life that wars against the spirit, and will not be subdued thereby. We yet are ignorant of spiritual things, being wiser in our generation in the things pertaining to this life, than in the spirit and in things pertaining to the life that is to come. We rejoice that thou dost not give us up by reason of our infirmity, nor by reason of our obstinacy, but that with long-suffering kindness and mercy inexhaustible thou art still pursuing our good, and art better to us than we are to ourselves; knowing how to do us good as we do not. Thou art never weary in fulfilling thine own desires; and all that we experience is the shadow and token of that which is to come. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, nor doth it yet appear what thou art, nor what thine administration of love in the other life shall be. All the measures of this life are incompetent, all the conceptions of this life, whatever they may be, are still afar off from the truth; and thou art better, and thou art more full of joy for those that are united to thee, and heaven is better, and the estate of the blest is better, than it hath entered into the heart of man to conceive. And all the measures that are fitted to our lower estate, are better fitted to us than the excellency of the knowledge which is in Christ Jesus. We rejoice that we shall not be disappointed, if through the grace of God our feet shall yet stand in Zion and before God. Thy mercy will not be severer and more limited than we thought; thy bound will not be less ample; the sweetness of joy will not be less than we thought, but transcending all conception. And we shall seem to ourselves, in our earthly estate, as little children are in their stature and knowledge to full-grown men. Now we see through a glass, darkly. We think as children; we understand as children; but when we are become men we shall put away our childish things, and see them in the unclouded realm of love, and rejoice in thee, and be satisfied. We pray that thou wilt grant unto us, in all the strivings and experiences of this mortal life, through which we pilgrim, that divine illumination, that Spirit, by which we shall be so sanctified, and our faith so assured, that we shall walk steadfastly, going from step to step, and from strength to strength, and gain in joy as we draw near to the promised hour.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing upon all thy servants. Sanctify to them the several dispensations of thy providence. May their afflictions, and their cares, and their burdens be so tempered that they shall work out spiritual good to them. We pray that any who are in bereavements and in deep affliction and sorrow of heart, may hear not far from them the comforting voice of Jesus. May they witness within themselves the pres-

ence of the Holy Spirit. May they be able to rejoice even in spirit. Though for the present it may not be joyous to them in great measure, yet may they have some comfort in knowing that it shall work out the peaceable fruit of righteousness in all that shall have been exercised thereby. And we pray that none may smite the hand of Christ that was pierced for us, nor press away the cup that he puts to our lip. But like him, though we pray for deliverance, may our prayer be, "Thy will, not ours, be done."

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless all in their households, and see in every heart that is lifted up to-day the love and the desire that are felt for others, and the supplications that are made for them. For is it not well-pleasing in thy sight that we pray for others as well as for ourselves?

Hear those that pray for their children, and those that pray for their brothers and sisters, and those that pray for their parents, and all that are praying for separated and absent friends, and all that pray for the sick. We beseech of thee, O Lord, that the voice of supplication, and that the silent supplications of every heart may come up before thee; and in the sphere of power, oh! send forth answers of mercy.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all the labors of this day. May those that teach in our Sunday-schools come with the fullness of the blessing of God in their hearts; and may they have given to them unwonted power of the Spirit of God.

Oh! that thou wouldst shed abroad upon this congregation thy divine influence, which shall lift them up above the sphere of common human power. Grant that they may discern the great spiritual realm, and that they may live more and more in the spirit of the heavenly state, and that they may be able, both by their works and by their invisible influence, to bring to bear the truths which belong to the great future.

We beseech of thee, O Lord! that thou wilt grant wisdom and fidelity to these thy servants. As they go forth sowing the seed or go forth reaping, alike be thou with them.

And we pray that thou wilt bless, not ourselves alone, but all the churches that are united to us in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ. However widely thy churches may be separated in outward instruments, may this common bond of love to God unite them more and more.

And bless the labors of thy servants that are appointed to preach, and of all officers, and all members of churches that are laboring with fidelity in the field of God. And we pray that thou wilt spread abroad the Gospel throughout our land and throughout all lands.

Draw near, to-day, to those that are far from home, and dwelling in darkness for the sake of the heathen that are around about them. Strengthen their wisdom and their faith; and grant that they may see the labor of their soul, and begin to be satisfied. We pray for the fulfillment of the promises which respect this world. O God! we beseech of thee, that thou wilt overrule all those influences which are at work; and grant that nations may rise in knowledge, and intelligence, and in purity, and in zeal, and in fidelity for the common welfare. May selfishness of power cease. May the cruelties of superstition cease. May men be banded together no longer by the law of force. May they more and more learn the power of beneficence, and nations, at length, through justice, come to toleration and to peace, and the glory of the Lord fill the earth. Wilt thou bring groans and tears and sorrows to an end. We beseech of thee, O thou blessed Spirit! bring in the peace of purity and the gladness of the latter day. And may the whole earth, at last redeemed, be a fit companion for thine heavenly sphere, and the new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness, come.

And to the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

THE GROUND OF SALVATION.

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus,—that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."—Eph. II., 4–8.

We have here an exposition (if it is to be found anywhere in the Bible) of the ground of salvation. There is no possibility, it seems to me, of framing language broader and more explicit than that which here declares that man's salvation does not stand in himself, in his character, in his nature, in his desire, and, by implication, in his skill, nor in his power; but that it stands in the infinite goodness and generosity of God—that God saves men on account of what is in *Him*, and not on account of what is in them.

"For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

A gift is some object of value transferred from one to another, as a sign and token of good will or friendship. A simple gift is neither earned nor deserved. It carries with it no idea of commerce, and no idea of equity. It carries exclusively the idea of friendship, of kindness. But sometimes a gift may be bestowed upon persons who are in great need of it, and who even solicit it on account of their need. Then it is called a *benefaction*, or, more commonly, a *charity*. And if it be something given to earnest and importunate solicitation, it is called a *dole*. But where a gift is presented to one not altogether as an act of friendship nor as a charity; where it is presented to one who by his special character and conduct has no right to expect it; who has in some sense fortified himself against the access of such a gift, then it is called a *grace*, in the language of the New Testament. A great kindness, then, shown to an undeserving person, is a grace; that is, it is a gift not deserved by any conditions which exist between the giver and the receiver of friendship, and so is a gift not to be expected.

SUNDAY MORNING, Dec. 4, 1870. LESSON: ROMANS V. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 269, 243, 233.

Now, the gift of eternal life, conferred through the Lord Jesus Christ upon men, is said to be both of these; namely, a gift and a grace. And there is something affecting, when it has once been called a grace, that it should also be called a gift. For as *grace* implies ill-desert, so when a great favor is conferred, and it is called a *gift*, the implication is, that the ill-desert is forgotten, and that the parties are treated as though they were on foundations of common friendship, unsullied and unforfeited. And in order to make this stronger, the apostle calls it a *free* gift. A gift is free anyhow; but here is brought to it that central conception of freeness which distinguishes it from a grace. There is supplied that peculiar grace of God which is great kindness shown to sinful men, who are undeserving of any such gift, but upon whom God, in his generosity, is disposed to look, not as culprits and criminals afar off, but as brought near to him, as friends through the Lord Jesus Christ. And the declaration of the apostle which we have selected, is, that spiritual life, pardon and salvation, here and hereafter, are gifts of God, or graces conferred. That is to say, that a man is pardoned and saved, not on account of his earning pardon and salvation, not on account of what there is in him, not on account of any equivalent to that favor which is rendered to him, but because there is that in the nature of God which goes out to man's salvation, and which represents a quality, a character, a nature in God, rather than any affection or condition in the persons who are the recipients.

The reason, then, of pardon and life, lies in the fullness of the love and generosity which inhere in the original and everlasting nature of God. It is a nature which throbs for outburst; which seeks out, in creating, and through creation, new and infinite channels by which may flow down to an infinity of creatures the greatness of the benefaction of the all-loving soul of God. And God's saving mercy is free to every intelligent creature that is on the globe, or that shall be on the globe, as an absolutely free gift.

But our profit in this amnesty or gift must come as all benefit of the soul comes; that is, by our accepting it. The proffer does not bring profit—the *realization* does. Thus, we take physical things by our physical organs. If they are presented to us, we possess them only when we have taken them in the way in which physical things, material things, can be taken. When intellectual things are presented to us (ideas, for instance, and new truths, or inflections of old ones), they are of no validity, and of no use, and of no significance to us as long as our intellect, being dead, does not rise up to receive them. A man presented with the most astonishing discoveries written out in a book which he cannot read, has in some sense a gift of knowledge presented to him; but it is of no use to him, simply because his in-

tellect cannot receive it under such conditions. If the gift is material, you must accept it as material gifts are accepted. If the gift be intellectual, it must be conferred and received as intellectual gifts are conferred and received. If the gift be emotive, then it must appeal to the sensibility of reciprocal emotion; as, if one confers confidence or affection or friendship, that is received only when a corresponding warmth of affection rises up to take it and to realize it. And the generosity, the life, the goodness, the loving-kindness, the long-suffering of God—these can be received by us only through some corresponding spiritual sensibility. And although they are ours in one sense, in another sense they never avail for us until in some manner we take them home to ourselves. This is what is meant by *receiving the free grace of God by faith.* It is the nature of God looking out upon men, sinful and degraded, to love them—as I shall have occasion to show before I am done. To love them without forfeit, and without waiting for their reformation; to love them while yet they are sinners and sinning—that is the nature of God. Yet the proclamation of that nature which the great heart of God beams and pours out; the proclamation of benefaction, pardon, restoration, inspiration, divinity, for every living soul; the proclamation of the dying of the Saviour to give liberty to mankind—if it falls on men as sunshine on stone, it does no good. For this great knowledge, this great proclamation of divine, loving amnesty, must be received by some feeling that corresponds to itself before it takes hold of men with any benefit.

A worm, to-day—if there be worms in December unburied—lives in a world just as large and just as rich as you and I do; but how much of this world can a worm appropriate? And what is all the world to it except just that little modicum which it can itself appropriate? The worm has just as much of the world as a worm can use—not a bit more. All the rest to it is surplusage.

The sparrow that hunts the worm has a great deal larger world; but then it is a sparrow-world, after all; and the world of the sparrow is measured by the power of the sparrow to appropriate. The sparrow has risen above the worm, a great way in organization, and a great many degrees above the worm-form. But, after all, it is simply a creature of that world which it can appropriate.

The dog is far higher than the bird. And in the dog you begin to see the germs of rational intelligence, and the germs of affection and of disposition. The dog is, as it were, the prophecy of the man. And yet, large as he is, advanced as he is, he owns only just so much world as a dog can appropriate. What to the dog is architecture, in respect to its element of beauty? Nothing. He has no eye for beauty. What to him are the sciences? Nothing. What is knowledge to him?

Nothing. It does not exist to him. It is outside of his possible apprehension. Only so much of this world exists to that dog as is able to get into him—into his apprehension and receptivity.

When you go to an intelligent barbarian, you have gone a great deal higher than the dog. And yet, the barbarian has in this world only just so much as he can appropriate. Yet there is an immense reach of reality that he never appreciates, and never comes into sympathy with, and derives no benefit from.

And from the barbarian man, step by step, through all civilizing influences, we come at last to the rational, the intelligent, the cultivated and spiritualized man.

And now, how much larger the world is to him! Yet all that part of the great outlying world that he has no affinity for, all that part of it for which he has no experience, no susceptibility, and which does not interpret itself to him on any chord, nor along any avenue of intelligence in him—all that part of the world is to him as if it were not. And if there be outside of the race of man angelic races; and if, high above all these, God over all, blessed forever, has filled the conception of perfectness, of beauty, of gracefulness, of gentleness, of sweetness, of ineffable love, of bounty, and of beneficence transcending all conceptions formed in our lower reaches of life; if there be such a God as this in the heavens, they only can have the benefit of that revelation of God who have some capacity to reciprocate it, to take hold of it, to see it, to feel it. But to all those who have no such capacity he is as if he were not. Therefore it is said that while men are saved by God's unconditional goodness, because it is the nature of God to love men, and to purify them, and to save them, they are not saved, after all, unless the knowledge, the proffer, coming to them, is accepted by something in them which corresponds to the divine nature. It is all as nothing to men who have no eyes to see it, no heart to experience it, and no will to accept it. We are saved by the grace or gift of God, and not of ourselves. We are saved by the faith of this grace or gift of God, by believing it, and accepting it. In other words, that is the way in which it works.

This, then, is the philosophy of faith, or receptive belief. And the reason why God's love does not help multitudes of men to whom it is preached, is, that they reciprocate nothing to it.

I remark, then, in the first place, in view of this brief statement, that this is the true and only method in which the doctrine of salvation should be presented to men. This is the ground and reason of salvation, namely, God's nature. It is the presentation of a personal God, full of love and full of mercy, rescuing from sin and degradation every soul that will receive his love. This is the true atonement. God is

the atonement. What he has done shows atoning mercy; but the essence and centre of atonement lies in God himself, and not in any exhibitory action of it. It is the eternal and the everlasting nature of love to heal sin, to forgive sin, to purify men from their lower state and bring them up out of the bondage of the flesh, and into the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God. Now, if one wants to know why a man is saved, by the grace of God he is saved. What does *the grace of God* mean? It means God's loving power. How comes God by this love? Ask him. Ask eternity. It is the nature of God.

A presentation to mankind of the theory of atonement from a lower plane than this, as has been so prevalent, and is to this day so prevalent, is pernicious. Not that there is not, or may not be, a theory of atonement; but an explanation of the "plan of salvation" as it has been drawn out in theology, after the analogy, mostly, of human civil governments, tends to destroy the essential part of the personality of God in the quickening and saving work of salvation. God's mercy through Jesus Christ is to be presented, evermore, simply as the sovereign, benignant, blessed act of a divine Person. We are not, in presenting this to men, to go back and ask the question, "Why did he?" or "How did he?" We are to stand simply in this great luminous fact, that it is the nature of God to love; and out of this great central nature God does present salvation to every man. Every man that will receive it will have the benefit of it. Those that do not accept it will go on as if it were not true, and to them it will not be true. That is the law of the universe. There is sun-light enough for all flowers that want it; but if a flower is under a rock the sun-light does not help it. Or, if you can imagine such a thing as a flower standing where the sun might pour down upon it, and hiding itself away out of the sun's rays; if you can imagine it as resisting the shining of the sun so that his light cannot reach it, the sun would be of no advantage to it. Summer only helps things that take summer into them.

We are not, then, to preach the *plan of salvation*, but we are to preach *God*, to men. We are not to preach the *atonement;* we are to preach *Christ*. We are not to preach the philosophy of redemption; we are to preach *the blessedness of God's heart and soul*. The moment that you undertake to preach that which is strictly philosophical in this matter, that very moment you preach man's theorizing as a substitute for the revelation of God himself.

But it will be asked, "Do not the Scriptures teach that the suffering and death of Christ were the ground and reason of this divine mercy?" I reply, No, not in the sense in which men think they do.

But, not to dwell upon that, the Scriptures do teach, I think, that

the sinless obedience, the expiatory suffering and the death of Christ, had some relation, in the invisible realm of divine government, to the world's salvation. I know that a great many dispute that; but I do not see my way clear to set it aside. After careful and long reading of Scripture, I cannot but believe that the Apostles taught, and meant men to believe, that the suffering of Christ had an expiatory virtue in it; that the suffering and death of Christ did do more than constitute a manifestation; that they did have a virtue that in some way changed things in the great world behind and out of sight. I cannot fairly construe the language of the New Testament other than so.

But it stops right there, without going one single step further. It merely recognizes, without explanation, without solution, the fact that the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus prepared a way for the mercy of God to reach mankind. It left that fact without a syllable of explanation as to the *how* or *why*.

And so I am accustomed to say that I believe the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus Christ did have an influence, out of my knowledge, and out of the world's knowledge, which will be revealed hereafter; that in some way they took hold of the processes of things in the universe; and that all that part of Christ's suffering which is explained to us, iterated and reiterated as a motive power, all that part of it which is addressed to our conscience and our intelligence and our susceptibility, is this: that the influence of it was to make manifest that which inhered in the nature of God; and that the sufferings of Christ, so far as we are concerned,—so far as we are to search them out, and work them out,—have not so much to do with the economy of God's moral government, as with the influence which is to be exerted among men. And obedience, and suffering willingly borne, and death triumphantly met—all these are modes by which we measure what is the fullness of love, the strength of love, the depth of love, and the power of love. Our Lord declared:

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

And it is said in the passage which I have read in your hearing this morning:

"Scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners [bad as we could be: I do not mean sinning as badly as we could, but being out of friendship and out of sympathy, and so being in the remotest sphere possible from the expectation of any such goodness]—God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

There was the commendation of love. It was an emotion that would bear suffering. It was an emotion that would bear pangs unutterable. It was an emotion that could go through a long experi-

ence of humiliation, and death itself—and under circumstances that no human intelligence can ever interpret. For the experience of one Man no man can interpret. The experience of so great a nature as that of Christ, going through that which he went through, no man can conceive of. That it was vast, that it was voluminous, Gethsemane bears witness. Many a drooping hour when his soul was troubled well-nigh unto death bears witness to its greatness. It was very different and far beyond all common human experience. And all of it, —what he thought, and felt, and suffered, and forbore, and did,—we are told by the Apostle are commendations of the love of God. They are interpretations of it; they are the measures of it. And so far as we are concerned, all that we need to know of the philosophy of the sufferings of Christ, is this: that they measure to us the greatness of his mercy and the greatness of God's love; that they interpret to us the effulgence and the fullness of that divine generosity and of that divine kindness in which is the hope of the world, and the salvation of every man that is saved.

When, then, we are to preach the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is not for us to preach so much an explanation of how Christ was enabled to be "just, and yet the Justifier." It may be true that there was a process which he went through in order to be just and yet the Justifier; but the philosophy of that process is never explained. It may be implied; it is implied: but all the explanation there is of it is but a hint. But, on the other hand, that which the Scripture does deal in, is that Christ is prepared to save; and that, so far as we are concerned, the ground and reason of mercy and salvation is love in Christ to us. The declaration is not, "Because I have gone through such, and such, and such steps I am now qualified to offer you salvation." It is, "Salvation is possible to the worst sinners, because God loves so. And that he does love so is made manifest by what He has suffered to show it." The suffering and the experience of Christ are always arguments interpreting the greatness of the love of God in Christ Jesus, and not philosophical statements for the sake of establishing or illustrating some mysterious plan which lies back unexplained.

If, then, a man knows that the nature of God, as made manifest through the Lord Jesus Christ, and in him, is such that it is his desire, and has been from eternity, and will be to eternity, to raise the weak, to lift up the fallen, to forgive the sinful, to build up those that are cast down, to fill meager and fainting souls with strength and sustenance and power, and to carry them on to glory, and that He does this for just the same reason that a mother does things for her child—not because the public sentiment makes her; not because the law

makes her; not because the child is going to pay her back; but out of the fountain of motherhood; out of that instinct and impulsion of love in her own bosom which makes her succor the poor and needy, the ground and reason of safety for the child being found in her *love*—if a man knows this, he knows all that the Scriptures undertake to teach him on this subject, and he does not need to search for any further explanation of it. Says God, "In my ineffable and everlasting love is the salvation of the world; and I pardon, I spare, I pity, I deliver, and I will ransom with an everlasting salvation, every one that believes in me, because I am so loving and so generous. It is my nature to love. I am Father, and I will brood the world as fatherhood and motherhood brood the cradle." That is the divinity and the power of the universe. That is the infinite power of love. That is the truth of the atonement. That is the glory of the atonement, in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost. And they are founded (they were illustrated in Jerusalem, but never founded there)—they are founded in the eternity of God—in that drift and current, moving mighty as the ages, from eternity to eternity. And our salvation stands, not in any plan, or theory, or explanation, or arrangement, but in the force of the whole total nature of God, as a Being of infinite love, and therefore of infinite compassion and infinite succor.

And that is the thing to be preached. That is the thing which breaks down the heart. That is the thing which makes men bow down their heads, and say, "If this be God, let me worship." That is the thing which gives hope and courage to mankind.

If one be sick, and you present him medicine, knowing his sickness perfectly well, and saying to him, "This will certainly alleviate your pain, and restore you," he takes the medicine. How? By faith in your statement, simply. And he is relieved by it. But suppose you thought it necessary to say to him, "This medicine was gathered, some of it in Africa, and some of it in South America; and it was gathered at such and such seasons of the year. The juices of the plant were extracted and prepared. And then by commerce they were brought hither. And now these various elements have been brought together and triturated in such and such proportions. And when taken, one part goes to the secretions, and another part goes to the liver, and another part goes to the nerves. And so, this being the way in which the medicine was obtained, in which it was made, and in which it operates, if you take it you will get well." If you were trying to make a doctor, I do not dispute that this might be a wise method, and that it might be advisable to undertake to show him whence medicine comes, and how it operates, in order to direct him in the prescription of medicine: but if you were prescribing for a

patient that was sick, and that was writhing in the agonies of present pain, you would not think of entering into a botanical explanation as to the origin of the medicine, nor as to the philosophy of its operation.

Now, I do not say but there may be reasons why, in the chair of theology, when you are discussing the abstract nature of all governments, and the abstract nature of all things derived from one source or another, it may be proper and necessary to discuss this matter of God's moral government. There is no question that may not be raised under such circumstances. There is no question that may not be in order in the philosopher's or the professor's chair. But when the Gospel is being preached, I protest against your presenting your *philosophy* of God's medicine for the soul's want, before prescribing the *medicine* for that want. First bring God's love to the soul that is sick, and let the heart take it; and then the man is healed by it whether he knows where it came from, how it is prepared, and why it was presented to him, or not.

Food for the starving does not require that the starving shall understand the origin of the food, or the operation of it. Raiment for the cold does not require that they for whom it is provided shall know whence it comes. A house of refuge being opened to those who are hard pressed, it is not needful, before they come in to enjoy its comforts, that they should know just when it was built, and just how it was built, and just how it was paid for, and just how it was arranged within. A knowledge of the history and economy of that house is not necessary before one takes the mercy which it offers.

A life-boat puts out to a foundering ship. Is it needful before one leaps from the sinking vessel into the frail life-boat, that every single thing about it shall be explained to him? Must he wait and be informed who made it, and of what materials it is constructed? Men never act in that way on subjects of that kind. It is only in matters of theology that they act so strangely. In all the great welfares of life, men do not undertake to teach the philosophy of things before the benefit of those things can be availed of; and they ought not to do it in matters so important and vital as the question of their soul's salvation. That which is essential is this *reciprocal love.* God so loved the world that he gave his Son to die for it; and He died for it while yet it was at enmity to him. And whoever believes that this dying of the Lord Jesus Christ is the evidence and interpretation of God's pardoning love; whoever will accept that truth, and believe it; whoever feels constantly the gushing in his soul of that love, and the certainty of it, is saved by the *ingress through grace,* as it is called, of this truth into his nature.

That which has power with men, then, I think to be, not that which presents to them the history, if I may so say, of moral mechanism in the universe; but that which presents to them a personal God, clothed with all the sympathies, and all the yearnings, and all the desires that characterize a father. That certainly is the way in which the apostles preached Christ everywhere; and that is the way which subsequent experience proves to be the most beneficial preaching of Christ. That which men most need to have preached, is not a plan of salvation, but Christ. Preaching God, and not the philosophy of God's moral government, is what is needed.

I remark, in the second place, that Paul does discuss the plan of salvation; but how? And to whom? Why, to the Jews. We find, for instance, in the apostles' writings—principally in Paul's—the declaration that Christ is the end of the law, and that Christ made a satisfaction for the law, and that he fulfilled the law, and made it honorable. And so men have inferred that the atonement of Christ was necessary in order that God should first satisfy the claims of justice and the claims of law throughout the universe; and that when they had been satisfied (some said in one way, and some in another; for there have been infinite diversities of theories in respect to this) then he could consistently with justice offer salvation to all that would comply with the terms. Now this is, in my humble judgment, surplusage. The whole question that Paul argued with the Jews was just as simple as A, B, C. Christ came to the Jews, himself a Jew, and a follower of the Jewish Law, declaring that that law should never pass away.

"Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled."

That is its substantial basis. And when the apostles began to teach Christ, men said, "Our fathers have been chastised enough for abandoning the law of Moses. This is God's law, made known to us, and confirmed through ages by proofs immutable; and we are not going into a new religion. We are not going to throw aside the Mosaic law and take the religion of Jesus Christ." And what was the answer of the apostle? It was this: "My dear brethren, you do not abandon Moses, and you do not abandon the law of God, when you accept the Lord Jesus Christ; for Jesus Christ himself is the law. The law means him. It was the foreshadowing of him. And in taking that which is the substance instead of the shadow, you fulfill the law better than if you took the law, and left the personal Christ out. You do not understand that in your history the whole economy of Moses was a schoolmaster to bring you to Christ; and that when Christ comes, and you take him, instead of taking something antagonistic to your law, you take that self-same thing. You keep it through a person in a man-

ner that you could not until Christ came. And therefore you do not give up the law. Christ makes the law more honorable, larger, nobler, wider, more spiritual.

Now, this was a historical argument to the Jew which had great meaning and which extricated him from embarrassment; for, throughout, "the law" means the law of God as taught by Moses, the Jewish law, the only law the Jews knew or cared anything about. But, when a modern teacher goes before a modern audience that has no such historical snare or besetment, that has never been educated in the Jewish law, and undertakes to argue that God himself must satisfy the great *moral* law, in the sense in which the Jews argued it, he has violated historical propriety; he has gone aside from scriptural example; he has introduced an official, and I think a merely scholastic issue that does not belong to the Bible, and only perplexes man's understanding. Therefore, when you read in the New Testament that the law had to be thought of and to be observed, do not think that it is meant that God had, before he could offer pardon to the world, to sit down and say to himself, "How shall I pardon the world that lies in wickedness? If I do, all my intelligent creatures in heaven will get up and say, 'Where is your justice?' Now, I must take care of the angels, and the universe first; and when I have taken care of these, I can forgive sinners." This is the modern fictitious and false notion.

Over against it, I present the sublime defense made by God himself, when, in answer to the same kind of reasoning on the part of the Jews, who thought that he could not save any but Jews, he said, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." It is God's declaration of independence to act according to the impulse of his own glorious personality. "I am not tied up by my promises to Abraham; I am not tied up by any federation with the Jews," said God: "I have liberty of infinite love, and of individual justice; and there is nothing that holds me. There is no system, no government, no anything that prevents my letting flash and flame out my own personal power of nature."

And that which was true in answering the Jewish prejudices and national conceit, is still more eminently true in answering the scholastic conceit of the philosophy of atonement. God saves men because he loves to save them. His mercy saves every man who knows enough to open his heart and say, "I will take it, and believe in it, and rejoice in it."

I see people going by my house on whom the roaring wind and the pelting rain are beating; and I open my door and say to a poor, slenderly clad, feeble woman, without umbrella, without cloak, without gloves, "My dear madam, come up hither. Come in." She rushes

up the stoop, glad of a shelter from the biting rain and hail; and I close the door on her, and bring her to the fire. Why do I do it? Because I am a humane man. It is just that, and nothing else. Who is she? Let us not ask. All we want to know is that she is miserable. Why do I show her mercy? Because she is virtuous? She is not. Her hand knows theft; her heart knows guile; but she is miserable, and she suffers. And when I know all that, do I send her away from my fire? No. I feed her. I clothe her. And if she goes out from my house, she goes out with my benefaction. And after she is gone, I console myself with the hope that my kindness to her will lead her to better ways. Why did I do it? Not in obedience to any law. There is no great problem of metaphysics in it. It is just this: That I love to do such things to a fellow creature. And is not the philosophy of atonement this: that God loves to heal sinning creatures? And he loves to do it because he is God. That is the reason for sinning men to lay hold of. You do not want to go any further than that. And all further explanations are overlaid with the miserable fictitious systems of man's justice which give us all our analogies of the requisitions of God's justice. And all our arguments on the theory of atonement, as based upon the necessities of moral law and government, are derived from civil jurisprudence. Civil jurisprudence is the best form of law that men can make; and yet, it is a very ricketty affair. There is nothing in the world that, beginning on right, sound principle, runs, at every single step, into more blunders and inconsistencies. There are not more meshes in a net than there are in the administration of human justice. It is what society cannot get along without; but it is not a perfect system in theory, and still less in practice. And are you to derive your analogies from that which is the mere creature of weakness and necessity? And are you to lay those analogies upon the infinite perfection of the eternal God, and say, "Because a judge on the earth has to act so and so, Jehovah has to act so and so?"

That explanation of the law, then, which had a historical meaning to the Jew, and which served to extricate him from embarrassments, when you undertake to apply it to us, commuting the law from the old historical, ceremonial law into the abstract or modern law of justice, is as a piece of mechanism between the soul and a personal God.

A plan of Salvation there may be; but that is not what we are sent to preach. A theory of atonement there may be; but that theory we are not sent to preach. We were not told to go down and explain to men how God might be just, and the Justifier; but simply that he *is* just when he justifies and clears, and when he condemns as well. The accomplished fact, and the sublimest and supremest fact that it is

possible for men to understand, is the personality of the everliving and everlasting God, the Source of life; the Source of healing; the Source of inspiration; the Source of growth; the Architect of ages; the Upbuilder; the Nurse; the Father; the Mother; the Friend; the First And the Last; the Beginning and the Ending; the Author and the Finisher. That is what He is to every needy soul, to every hungry soul, to every wretched soul. God is enough, in the infinite fullness of his nature and love and sympathy, for every living creature on the boundless globe, and through the epochs of time. And that great fact of divine love in personality—let it not be degenerated into a web of metaphysics! Let it not carnalize itself into the miserable analogies of a botched human justice! Let it stand and glow in the pure sympathy and glorious personality of a central God; Father, Son and Holy Ghost, all-loving, all-drawing, all-inspiring and lifting up men into their ultimate and rejoicing condition in heaven. *There* is atonement for you!

Every end of religion requires that man should be brought face to face and heart to heart with a loving God. For it is this divine heart-power that is our whole hope.

You remember that very affecting story that lies unused so often in the Old Testament, where the Prophet Elisha was at night called in to see the widow's child. The child was dead. It was the only light in the house; and that light went out. And so the house was dark. And you remember how he stretched himself on that child, and put his face on the little child's face, and put his hands on the little child's hands, and his body, part by part, over the child's body; and how the little child sneezed, and his life began to come back? Beautiful it is in the old prophet's story. Infinitely more beautiful, to me, is the thought that the great God lays his great heart on my heart, and on your heart, and on all hearts. And it is this pressure of the heart of God that wakes in my life correspondency, sympathy, hope, love, a new life.

And it is that which men want. It is power to realize God, and to know how beautiful he is, and how generous he is, and how long-suffering he is, and how abundant he is in mercy and kindness—though he will not clear the guilty finally. It is the knowledge of this that breaks down the flinty hearts of men. And it is the thing for you to preach and talk, as it is the thing, also, for you to rejoice in, in your own personal lives—namely, the glorious fullness of Jesus Christ, who is the manifestation of God, as pitying, sparing, forbearing, rebuilding, converting, sanctifying, and finally saving.

So, then, when at last we come home to glory—then, not as a doctrine, but as an experience, every one of us will say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Then we will say, "Not by works of right-

eousness which I have done, but by the love of God, I have been saved."

Let me read now again, in your hearing, that whole connection in the 5th of Romans,—for it is one of the strongest passages of Scripture, and it will throw light on still another point:

"When we were yet without strength, in due time [or in the fullness of time] Christ died for the ungodly."

That which God's love is willing to suffer death for, is ungodly men.

"Nor scarcely for a righteous man will one die [among men]; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die."

A merely just man does not excite much sympathy. A benevolent man excites a good deal of sympathy; and some might die for a benevolent man though they would not for a just man.

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

O sinners! he loved you so that while you were yet sinners he died for you; he loves you so that while you are yet sinning, your sinful heart does not obliterate the glory of his love toward you.

"Much more, then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

That is to say, the life of Christ is a great deal more efficacious, is a great deal more powerful in the general salvation of this world, than his death was, powerful and efficacious as that was. And it seems to me that here is all the philosophy that we want, and all the explanation that we need. It seems to me that here is the sum and substance of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ: Man is sinful, and utterly unable to build himself up; and God, in the spirit of infinite love and generosity, shining new life and new light, pouring abroad effulgent beams upon the hearts of men, is willing to rescue them, and willing to build them up. And what time any heart or soul looks up, beholds, recognizes, receives; what time any one feels, "God loves me with an infinite loving, and is my Father for my soul's good," it is because the corresponding principle of love has sprung into being in that soul. And the moment that feeling of love begins to work in you, you are a new creature; you are passed from death to life. And from that time onward, the mighty nature and power of the universe, as disclosed in the love of God in Christ Jesus, that wonderful secret influence, will be working in you toward sanctification; and finally you shall stand and see him face to face, when the work is completed in you, and you shall be like him.

Thanks be to God for the unspeakable gift of his Son Jesus Christ!

And to every poor, needy, wretched, sinful, conscience-smitten, and consciously weak creature in this congregation, I bring no elaborate system, I bring no mysticism, I bring no philosophical curiosity, I bring no need of vast knowledge in respect to moral government and to the plan of salvation; but I bring to you a truth which is just as simple as the truth of a mother overhanging her cradle. I bring to you the nature of God as shown in Jesus Christ—a curative nature of love, recreating. And I say that this God is revealed for you. If you need help, here it is. If you need forgiveness, here it is waiting for you. If you need inspiration, here it is. It is not formed into a system; it is not wrought out by any principle; it is this: *God, in Christ Jesus, loves, spares, pardons, and will save.*

Now, I beseech of you, if your thoughts turn toward this subject this morning, in its simple disclosure; if there is in your bosoms a yearning for a higher life, a longing for a better experience, turn away from all human knowledge. Learn in prayer. With the Word of God go to your closet, and ask that blessing. Seek that knowledge by faith, and you shall not seek in vain. It is the way in which you have been invited. It is the way in which thousands have gone. And to-day there are in heaven more than numbers can count, who, in this simple way, believe that God loves them, and has pardoned them, and will love them unto perfection, and who embrace Him in a spirit of corresponding love. There are multitudes without number in heaven who triumph over the victory of redeeming grace. May more be added to this number—more out of this congregation; more out of our families! And, Christian brethren, may we grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, unto the end. *Amen.*

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We rejoice in thee, thou ever-loving and blessed God. We rejoice in the greatness of thy love, and in the power which it hath, and shall have. We rejoice to believe that it shall not always be so,—that by those in heaven thou art known and adored, though by a few only, upon earth; but that the knowledge of the Lord shall yet cover the earth, and that thy will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. Toward that consummation, we rejoice to believe, through darkness, through light, through storm, through calm, things are tending, and love shall yet be victorious over selfishness and animalism; and all things shall praise thee, and rejoice in thee. We desire, O Lord, to quicken our faith, and to take comfort in the midst of discouragements by the hope of victory. We desire to rejoice in the day of small things, when wicked men are strong and the righteous are feeble. We desire to take shelter in the prophecy and prediction of better things to come. We rejoice that the conflict, a part of which we wage, is not endless We rejoice that sighings and groanings with travailing in pain until now which have belonged to the whole earth shall not be perpetuated forever. There shall be an end; there shall be illustrious victory; there shall be joy

and peace abiding undisturbed forever; and they shall be crowned with love. And all that are thine own, purified from every stain and from every spot, shall rejoice together, being as the sons of God.

Now, Lord, we beseech of thee that we may enter into the greatness of thy thought, and into the zeal with which thou art pushing the world forward towards the day of final consummation. May we, in our own hearts, be cleansed from all unrighteousness, and become as little children. And with the simplicity of faith and love may we embrace Jesus, our Saviour, and live in him, and abide in the power of his resurrection. May we be raised from all death and from all sin into newness of life. We pray that we may be quickened by the divine Spirit. We know how quickly drops our nature back towards earth again. We know that but for the shining of the light of thy Spirit all our light would turn to darkness; and that but for the attraction of the divine love, we should fall back again to dust. And we pray for this quickening influence of thy Spirit, and for this life of God shed abroad in our hearts. We pray that sin may not have dominion over us, nor within us; that we may be able to overcome temptations and resist easily besetting sins; that we may be able to live by faith, and have the victory of faith. If there are those who are storm-bestead, those who are driven for refuge and know not whither to flee, O Lord, let them to-day see the heart of God, the refuge of the sorrowful. Let them, to-day, behold the mercy that is in Jesus Christ, the help of every needy one. Let them behold the sweet influence of the Spirit of God that brings us consolation through all the sorrows of life. We pray for all that are tempted more than they are able to bear; and for all that to-day look back upon their evil ways to repent of them, and turn from them that they may live. Grant them thy quickening influence and great encouragement. Meet them with benedictions. And grant to them that forgiveness which they supplicate.

Bless those that pray for others—parents for children; friends for friends; companions for companions; teachers for their pupils; and all that pray for those that are separated from them and are afar off from them. We pray that this may be a golden hour of their experience. And bless the absent ones. Remember those that go down upon the great waters. Remember those that are separated by the seas from those that love them. Remember those that are strangers in foreign lands. Remember those that are in the wilderness where no man dwelleth. Remember all, this day, with divine blessing, whom our hearts remember.

And we pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who, to-day, shall make known the Gospel of Christ, the unsearchable riches of divine love. And wherever they are, may their hands be strengthened and their hearts be encouraged; and may they preach faithfully the word in season and out of season. Even if they see no fruit from their sowing, still may they sow their seed by the side of all waters.

And we pray that thy blessing may rest upon all those that have gone and are going forth to the poor and ignorant to bring them up from degradation, and make them like the Master. May they have the spirit of consolation in their work; and may they see that the travail of their soul is prospering.

And we pray that thou wilt bless the nations of the earth. Bring wars, and all their cruelties and sufferings, speedily to an end. Grant that nations may learn war no more. May benevolence take the place of selfishness; and may men learn more to love and less to hate. And may that kingdom in which dwelleth righteousness come, and the whole earth see the salvation of God.

And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY.

And Jesus said unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?"—Mark viii., 17-18.

There is very much Scripture which always has to be interpreted with an allowance for the different languages in which it was written, the different nations out of which it sprang, and the difference which there is between Oriental modes of thought and Oriental expressions, and our modern methods of thinking and methods of expression. This is apparent, not unfrequently, in the teachings of our Lord. For although the "style," as it is called, which was employed by the Saviour, seems at the first thought to be very simple, it was evidently full of enigma, of paradox, of parable, of proverb, or "dark sayings," as they were called,—unlike our philosophical mode. The immediate occasion of these words which I have read, and which are severer in seeming than they were in fact, veiled under the form of rebuke, was a caution given by Christ to his disciples to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod." Their ear caught that word *leaven*; and they took it literally as meaning the physical idea.

We smile at their simplicity in supposing the rebuke to be because they had taken no bread with them—for that was their interpretation of it. And he rebukes them for not understanding him. He recalls to them the miracles by which he created for thousands an ample supply of bread and of meat; and it is as if he had said, "How could you suppose that, because you had taken no leaven with you, I cautioned you against the leaven of the Pharisees, meaning that you must not borrow their leaven, nor make bread in their troughs? It is another thing that I taught; namely, that you should follow, not their teachings but mine, and understand, as it is time that you should understand, spiritual things, having been so long with me, and having had so much instruction." This is the purport of the passage. They had the means

SUNDAY MORNING, Dec. 11, 1870. LESSON: LUKE xii. 27-59. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 604. 888. 890.

of understanding him, and they should have employed those means. This is his way of saying, "Every man is responsible for the use of his own faculties in ascertaining all the truth which is necessary for his conduct. *You have eyes; why do you not see? You have ears, why do you not hear?*—these senses standing for faculties at large.

Men are equipped with all necessary faculties for their guidance, both in the physical and in the moral world, and they are practically held responsible, in consequence, for the right use of their faculties, and for right judgments formed by means of them. However many helps there may be in the world, there are no substitutes for a man's own judgment and choice and action. However many things there may be in which men may transfer a part of themselves, as it were, to others, there is a central element in every man that is untransferable; and every man must stand for himself, think for himself, find out truth for himself, and follow for himself that which is found out. Whoever may help him, and whatever may throw light upon the problem, are collateral. He is the principal. And this is not the law of certain prominent and strong men: it is a law which belongs to the race. It is the moral economy under which all natural laws are administered in their relations to men; under which all civil laws are administered; under which all moral laws are administered.

This is a principle so profound, and it touches so many questions, that I shall feel at liberty to go into it a little more at length before I make the applications of it.

Responsible individualism is the constituent element of government and of society, whether you regard society as framed of God, or as fashioned of man. It is not, then, the design of things that a man should simply go right; because if to go right had been all that was meant, it would have been far easier to make all men go right by making them differently. No puppet goes wrong. Make a doll, put the machinery to it, and turn the crank, and it will go just as you mean it shall, every time, for a hundred times, and never make a mistake; but it is a puppet when you have got through—no more, and no less. And if men's merely going right had been all that was desired, they could have been made after a very different pattern. And there might have been a great economy of materials practiced. Far less would be necessary to make a man that should simply go when the crank was turned. If that had been all that was needed, perfect men could very easily have been made. People seem to think that to live about right is all that is required. Not at all. That is not the end. Living right is only the means to an end. It is an incident to something greater. The divine idea in the creation of the world, seems to me to be *manhood*—bulk of being, variety of being, power of being. And going

right is simply the way by which men are to come to that augmented being.

That men should find out what is right, therefore, and learn how to fulfill what they find out, is as important as that they should go right. It is the finding out that makes men grow. It is the exertion to do what you have ascertained against difficulties, that proves, develops, forms and authenticates manhood. For, to be a self-centered individual, plenary in reason and moral sense, to be *like God*—that is the design which God says he is working out in man, in the heaven, and upon earth. And the method by which he works men toward that grand design is to lay on every man the responsibility of using the faculties with which he has been endowed, in their own spheres; putting him to find out the truth, to guide himself by that which he finds out; giving him ample helps, collateral suggestions, pattern, counsel and law, giving him none of these things in such a peremptory form as to supersede his own individual liberty and responsibility for finding that which is right, and then doing that which he has found out.

This is true of our senses, and of all their commerce in the natural world. Our eye, our ear, our hand may be trained; but after all, there is no training, there can be no training, there never was any training, which did not leave the individual responsibility untouched. If a man says, "To my eyes that is level," when it is precipitous, and I accept his sight in lieu of my own, and walk over the precipice, I tumble to the bottom none the less because I take his sight instead of my own. If a man says, "It is two yards," and I stand just a yard from him as he swings a whip, I none the less take the whip because I believe him instead of believing myself. It is for me to see, and to follow my seeing. I may help myself; I may get what light I can from sources outside of myself; I may form my judgment in any complex case by the assistance of other people's senses; but, after all, I am the pope of my own senses; I am the sovereign of my own faculties; and it is designed, either that I should form a judgment, and act according to it, or that I should take the penalties and the consequences. And all the early part of our life is spent in learning how to use our senses; in learning how to be a being. The child grows first by learning how himself to use every muscle, every bone, every limb; how then to use those higher senses which stand intimately connected with mentality; and how, afterwards, little by little, having gone from sensuousness to intelligence, to go from mere intelligence to sentiment, and from sentiment to *moral* sentiment, or to that which is right, and not to that which is fact alone.

I do not undertake to say that we may not derive great benefit from the foregoing example of others; from what they have learned. Books

may help us train our senses; but no book, and no teacher, and no person outside of me can ever dispossess me of this, that I am primarily set to find out by the use of my senses all the truth that belongs to the sphere in which they act. *The sovereignty of the individual*—a term very much abused, and yet a term that may convey a correct idea—is asserted throughout every sphere of man's action.

It is the same in the transaction of secular business. It is the best way, although it is the hardest way, to hold every person responsible for his self-helpfulness, for his individual correctness of judgment, and individual correctness of measures or means applied to ends. Men seek to find out ways which shall release them from liability to mistakes. They marvel, frequently, that there have not been such ways found out. They think that when the millennial day comes, things will be so organized in this world that all things will come symmetrically, and that men will come into affairs naturally, peacefully, happily, every man finding everything done to hand, or else the doing of it being so natural and so easy that he will have no thought, no care, no ache, no study, no responsibility. Never: *never:* NEVER!

If iron is to be made into a tool, it has to go into the fire, and on to the anvil. Otherwise a tool can never be made of it. And there never will come a day in which a man can be made into a man, while the economy of this world lasts, except by going into the fire, and on to the anvil, and under the hammer. Manhood, if it comes at all, must come through a great many mistakes, and a good deal of pain from those mistakes.

Now, take a man in business. If he is readily expert in that business, and he becomes so by easy ways, it must be a very simple business. No man ever becomes, in secular affairs, broad, multifarious in power, eminent and pre-eminent, except it be by a tentative series of endeavors; except it be by a probation which implies perplexity, mistake, blunder, a thousand painful forms of experience.

Is that necessary? Was it necessary to the original conception of such a world as God was pleased to create? It certainly is the fact in respect to this world that he did create. What other worlds he may have created, I do not know; but so far as this world is concerned the divine law is in that direction. It is laying the responsibility upon all the powers of a man, in his secular affairs, of finding out the truth, of ascertaining that which is right. The skillful, the lucrative, the honorable, the pleasurable—all these things are found out. And after the world has been finding out for six thousand years and more, no man can be born now, and not have to find out just as much as they did who were of the first generation. For no man ever transmitted his experience to anybody else. Really an experience does not become mine till I have realized it in my own action.

A father brings up his children. He has gone through the school of experience. He has committed innumerable mistakes; and he can point to this or that mistake and save the child from it, and so abbreviate his course. But there is one thing that parents never can do: they never can bring up their child so that he will be a skillful man of the world, without suffering; without committing blunders; without falling into endless mistakes; without having been obliged to ply to the very root his own faculties, his observation, his judgment and his will. That you cannot help. Everybody must go through that school or else he has no business in this world.

It is precisely the same in civil life. A government that thinks for its people, or that undertakes to think for them, dwarfs them at once. Such a government is what is called a *paternal government*, and is the fool's ideal of a government. It is a government of fatuity. It is a government that thinks just how its people ought to act, and then lays down all its thoughts in exact concatenation, and then has physical motives by which the whole people train as if they were but a machine. Such a government may be called *paternal*, and men may admire the order of such a government; but it has no education in it. It has no developing power in it. It is a machine, and it makes men machines. And there never was an ecclesiastical or civil government that undertook to think for men, and tell them how to think, and to act for them, and tell them how to act, that it did not take from them the power of thinking and acting to any purpose. There was never a government of Church or State that took from men the necessity of individual responsibility, that made men that were worth having.

As I shall show, the sublimest undertaking of it was in the Jewish economy. "What the law could not do in that it was weak," says the apostle. It was a trial and a failure. And if that failed, there is nothing else of the sort that will ever succeed. But I shall speak more at length upon that in a few moments.

Minute rules for conduct, for the sake of superseding personal responsibility on the part of every single citizen, makes machine-men. It seems easier to live in such a way as this. Men think it abbreviates the processes of life. But then, it generates a life that is not worth having. It is not in analogy with nature. It is not the design of nature to make a grand city, but to make grand citizens. It is not important that there should be a magnificent nation, but it is important that the individual elements of the nation should be large, and self-helpful, and vital in thought and in purpose. Yet, time and history have run perpetually to making, not full men, but something less than men. Churches, cities, nations, have been built up as if the aggregate name was a more important thing than the special element. It is the

same in our moral sphere. Principles are given to us. Men find out the applications of these principles on every side, in themselves, in their fellow men, in their minor organizations, and in their larger reach, for time and for eternity. The responsibility is laid on us, not simply of finding out what has been told us, but of finding out a great deal that has not been told us. We are not to suppose that men are to be left absolutely alone in such a world as this without any helps; without any foregoing experience, recorded and reported; without any guides whatever. But in all cases the man is the superior—not the guide. He is not to be judged by, but is to judge his creed, his church, and his conduct. Man is superior to his circumstances. I do not say in point of view, but I do say in point of ideal, this is the design of God, plainly indicated. All helps are good, except the helps that smother self-help. All helps are to be employed as so many excitants of one's self. All other men's thinkings are good for you if they make you think. If they overlay your thoughts with what is called "knowledge," they are bad for you. Other men's thoughts are like manure on farmed soil, not designed to be the thing that is good, but to stimulate to the production of that which is good. And so all teaching, and all thinking, and all guiding, and all experience given to man, are given to him only as so many stimulants to develop in him more power than he would have had without them. And they are doing their work when they are making him work; but not when they supersede his work, or substitute something else for it. These things are helps, therefore—not governors.

There is an exception in cases where a man is not a man. A child is to be helped. During the time that he is an animal, and not a man, the experience of the parent is to be substituted for his lack of experience. And we do not let him come into this reasoning at all.

There is only one other exception, namely, that of persons who are children all their life long—for there are some so weak that they never outgrow being children, and go out of life the same size as they came into it. I admit that there is to be an economy in every wise society, to take care of the feeble—the feeble-minded.

But these are always abnormal, exceptional cases; whereas, the great principle goes on, that it is the divine idea of the development of man to bring to bear upon him such stimulating influences as shall compel him, having eyes, to see, having ears, to hear, and having reasoning faculties, to think, so that he shall be educated, and self-educated, and be made more a man by that very process of development.

Now for some applications.

The first is, to throw light on democratic governments, and also on absolute governments, of which latter we have had a very lively

specimen in Paris. Some of our traveled popinjays come back from Europe, talking about the superb order of Paris. They talk about the splendid postal system there, and the splendid civic systems. They tell us that you can walk through the streets there, in the middle of the night, in any direction. The police arrangements, they say, are so complete, that one is perfectly safe. They represent everything as being orderly in the highest degree there. When they go away, they are proud of our democratic government; but when they return, they are full of admiration for autocratic governments. "Look," they say, "at the condition of New York city? What kind of a government is there there? What safety is there there for a man's reputation, his money, or his life? All is misrule and discord in that city. Here is self-government for you," these aforesaid popinjays say, "and there is autocratic government: give me that. Give me a government where there is order and peace; where the great ends of society are perfectly served; and where there is safety for life and property and reputation."

Is that the only thing, then, in this world that is good for anything —the safety of reputation, the safety of property, and the safety of life? The least valuable thing in this world is life, frequently. If you could only make a good selection of men, there would be nothing so good as killing, in this world. The trouble is that promiscuous killing generally goes from the bad toward the good. But the earth is burdened with worthless population.

Now, that which the autocratic government of a European city accomplishes, is this: it takes away from its citizens the drill of thinking. It deprives them of the opportunity of learning how to take the responsibility of organizing order among themselves. And that which is an apparent blot upon democratic institutions (and it is a difficulty; it is a penalty; it is a pain) is, that it does not immediately accomplish as good ends as an absolute and aristocratic government. There is less personal safety; there are more, I was going to say, "jobs," under a democracy than under an autocracy. But this last I take back: there are more "jobs" under an autocracy than under a democracy—though it will surprise you to hear me say it. There are apparent advantages in an autocratic government. But in the long run, a population that has been brought up under democratic rule (I am not speaking of our party phrase, but of the broad philosophic sense of the term *democracy*) —in the long run a community brought up to think for itself, to organize for itself, to take the penalties of it, to bear the evils which accompany it until they become unbearable, and then to cure them, and so to cure them that they shall not break out again—in the long run they are superior in intelligence, in genius and power, to a generation of

men that have been brought up in the puppet order of Paris, which some men so covet and want.

But these men, without manhood in themselves, do not miss it in other people; and so they go to foreign cities, and come back and brag over them, and dispraise our own cities. Not that there are not evils that go along with self-government; not that there are not monstrous evils under a democratic government which wait long, that the sword under an autocratic government cures quick—for the sword does cure diseases quick. But while it cures the diseases, it destroys citizenship. On the other hand, citizenship here is saved while the evils are waiting long to be cured by the citizens themselves. A republican government in a hundred points is weaker than an autocratic government; but in this one point it is the strongest government that ever the sun shone upon—that it has educated a race of men that *are* men. And it is to make men that the world was built—though you might not suspect it by the specimens.

If, then, your conception of municipal government is a city, wound like a watch, in which all the elements are simply meant to go with absolute regularity; if what you want is government like a watch which runs just so every day from year to year, in the same temperature, without variation, never changing, and keeping perfect time, then an autocracy is what you want. But if you want a government that shall develop human nature, and make it fresh, and various, and always new and progressive, then you cannot have one of these regulated governments. You must let men find their own way, and bump their own heads, curing the bumps; you must let them fall into mistakes, and learn by falling into them to keep out of them; and by and by, when enough have done it, by coöperation they will cure the evil. Sometimes the constitution breaks down before the cure can be established; but where there is a constitution that can bear the strain, and the cure is established, it is a glorious cure. And give me strong men rather than strong cities.

Secondly. We see, in the light of these principles, the contrast actually existing between Judaism and Christianity. When the Israelites were brought out of Egypt they were slaves. The great principle which Moses undertook to inculcate was *righteousness.* Righteousness means acting according to a straight line, as it were. He laid down ordinances and laws which regulated every part of every man's conduct in the nation. Those ordinances and laws went into men's dwellings, and into their industrial occupations. There was an autocracy established in Church and State; and their religion and patriotism were one and the same thing. It undertook to pervade everything. Every day was marked out, and every hour of every day,

for worship. The particular place where they were to worship was pointed out. They were instructed how they were to worship, and what they were to worship with. Not only were they instructed that they were to worship with certain elements, but they were instructed how those elements were to be prepared, running into the most extraordinary minuteness, until men were perfectly meshed and webbed by provisions for doing everything right. And as long as they were very low and weak, this economy carried them up, and educated them until, if they could escape they would be benefitted, but if not they would be injured. That which is the best thing for a child when he is fourteen years of age is often the worst thing for him when he is twenty-four. Clothes that are a very good fit for children when they are six years old, are a very bad fit for them when they are sixteen years old, and must be let out, or they will split out in every direction. The Mosaic system was one of rigid laws. The Christian system was one without any instrumentation; without one single institution appointed rigorously; without one single point that represented the precision and imperativeness of the Mosaic institution. Our Lord instituted a spiritual kingdom, and put the stimulus upon men to develop reason and conscience and spirituality, and left them to do it in perfect freedom.

This does not argue that Christianity should not have days; but they are not to be "Thus saith the Lord" days. It does not argue that there should not be institutions; but they are not to be rigorously authoritative or obligatory institutions. They are to be institutions such as we shall have found to be useful, and which we shall therefore use, not because they are imposed upon us, but because they are useful. Christianity lets us have all manner of helps. But liberty is the essential element of it. Institutions, ordinances, creeds, churches, priests, all manner of imposed helps, Christianity ignores as obligatory. It permits them if men want to use them; but it takes the ground that if they do use them it is because they choose to, and not because God obliges them to. Christianity has infinite liberty of appropriation; but it is not under obligation to have a church, nor a Sabbath, nor a creed, nor any other thing. It is free.

Judaism was a system of precise institutions. Christianity is a charter of liberty. Judaism brought men up a certain way, and could not go a step further. Then came Christ, and unfolded the supernal manhood of God in the flesh. And from that point human nature sprang up, and sprang out. And if Christianity had been kept to this its fundamental idea; if its principle of liberty, its stimulating power, its conception as to the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation, had been its main force, we should have been advanced a great many ages beyond the point at which we are now.

In the third place, the reason why Christianity has not done more, is because this principle of life has been largely ignored. Christianity fell into the old tendency very speedily of providing for men, and not leaving them to provide for themselves. It undertook to order men's worship through its Church—the great mediæval church, which is the most sublime, elaborate, and astonishing system of organization that the world was ever cursed with: *blessed*, they say; *cursed*, *I* say. Christianity, enshrined in this vast catacomb of mazes and labyrinths, has stood right in the way of itself. It has undertaken to do again, by old barbaric instruments, what it should have outgrown, and what the world is fast outgrowing. And spiritual liberty was deposed, and ecclesiastical despotism took the place of it.

Now, if I were going to have either, I would have Judaism. The old Jewish system of religion was the nearest to sublime natural religion of any system in the world; that is, it came nearer to the aspects of material nature than did the superficial moralities and refinements that grew up under the great mediæval system, and are embodied in it. I should prefer Judaism, pure and simple, to Romanism, pure and simple. It is more manly, more natural, more divine, more stimulating.

I remark, fourthly, that this is the fundamental difference between all hierarchal churches and all democratic churches, or churches of the common people: One of these modes of organization attempts, in a ministerial way, to provide for every act of worship, for every ceremony, for every belief, for every routine, for all government. The other of these modes of organization inspires men to provide these things for themselves, and lets them have liberty to do it.

Oftentimes I hear men say, "I do not believe in Congregationalism, it leaves everything so untied, so hap-hazard. It has no government, no process of order. Men, under it, do not know exactly what to do, and do pretty much as they have a mind to. I believe in a church that just divides the year up, and divides all the chapters of the Bible up so that there shall be a certain portion of Scripture to be read every day; so that when a man gets up in the morning, he shall not be at a loss what to do, but shall only have to see what day it is, and then look and find the passages of Scripture that he is to read, and the prayers that he is to say, and directions as to the other duties he is to perform It is pleasant to have everything arranged for one in that way." It *is* very convenient; but is it better for a man to be baptized into a specific system, and never take off his swaddling clothes, and have a nurse to take him up as a babe and carry him through life, and never have anything to think about, nor anything to do; never be obliged to vex himself with responsibility; but lie brooded and sucking all through life? There are a great many who have that conception; and

any church that comes near to that; that is to say, any church that does everything for a man; any church that takes from a man the necessity of thinking for himself, and thinking till his head aches; any church that takes all perplexities out of a man's way, so that he is never annoyed, but is always easy—any such church just suits them. But no true church should undertake to mechanically organize life so as to supersede or cover down this fundamental principle of God's word—the necessity of every man's organizing his own life. Such churches are very much in vogue. And far be it from me to undertake to say that there is not a liberty on the part of men to organize such churches. Humanly speaking there is such a liberty. What I am pointing out is this: that the educating power of such churches is not so great as the educating power of those churches which seem to be far more scattered and disorderly—but seem so only because the principle of individual development does drive men asunder more than the principle of an organized government, and because this principle of personal liberty makes men strong and robust.

This principle is more valuable than the simple idea of order—though I recognize the order, and well know that the distribution of both elements is desirable. Order, the habit of coördinate acting, is important; but it is not sufficient. There need to be, in addition to this, the principles of individual opportunity and individual obligation.

Fifthly, this question takes hold of the difficulties which men find in the Bible. People often say, "I cannot believe that that is a revelation, because nobody seems to know what it teaches. There are infinite diversities among believers of the Bible as to the doctrines which it contains. A revelation from God, it seems to me, must settle something. How can the Bible be God's revelation when it is so full of obscurities; when it is so full of doctrines that are enigmatical; when there are apparent contradictions in it; when there are historical collisions in it? It cannot be from God; for if it were it would be perfect." Would it? Was not this material world from God? and is it perfect? Did not it begin in germs? and did not these germs go through all forms of development—that is to say, from the lowest stage of imperfection clear up to the highest? And is not that the peculiar characteristic in the world—germination, and development all the way up from the lowest to the highest point? And is not that, if I may so say, the trade-mark of God—early imperfection, and late, self-evolved perfection?

If, therefore, there was to be a divine revelation, do you suppose that God would have begun by making every thing so plain at the beginning that men should have been saved all the perplexity of finding out the truth for themselves? Is it not more likely that he would have

done just as he has done—given men gradually all manner of traditions that have been handed down from the earliest ages, as indications of the way in which the race had developed, and left them to work out principles from these?

Revelation is in strict analogy with the world itself; and both of them are conformed to this one central element. Having eyes, we must learn to use them, and must learn to see right with them. Having ears, we must learn to use them, and must learn to hear right with them. Having reason we must learn to use that, and must take the responsibility of using it right. And having a moral sense, we must learn to employ it in finding out the ways of God toward men. For you have got to find them out if you are to know them. Another may help you; but, after all, the central responsibility rests in you.

But men say, "It would be so much easier if one knew just what duty is, and knew how to do it." But the finding it out is the most wholesome part of it. That is the very thing which keeps men awake, and keeps them thinking, and makes them discriminating. Finding out what is true, is just as important in education as the truth itself when it is found out. And finding out the way; the very thing that makes men puff and murmur—the wear and care and anxiety to know what they ought to think and know—these things are a part of God's great educating scheme in this world. A revelation, therefore, which took all care and all difficulties out of the way, would, by so much, lack the nature of being a divine one.

Lastly, in such a world as this, where the great central principle is that every man is responsible to God and not to his fellowmen; responsible for his thoughts, for his feelings, for his character, for his development into all strength and stature of perfect manhood—in such a world as this, there is every reason why men that sit under the constant teaching of the Gospel and Gospel institutions, should cease, and should a long time ago have ceased, from looking at others for models and for motive power. We are accustomed to grow under the superstitious influence of a mediæval age to such an extent that men scarcely think that they can live or die without the priest. The child that is born without the baptismal touch is not fairly born. The child cannot die and go out of the world unless the priest prepares him. If men are sick, the minister must come to them. The man of the house may be a great deal deeper and wiser and stronger; but then, he is not "ordained." We feel that there is a certain sanctity in the church, and that men must have something of this outside ecclesiastical influence before they can venture forward. Nay, men seem to go to churches very much as fishes come in shoals upon the coast when the net is thrown around them and they are drawn in. Men wait for revivals; men wait for their

neighbors to talk with them; men wait for the minister to go after them. Men that have come to a degree of seriousness which is ample as a motive power; men that have long been instructed in the way of duty to men, and of love to God, and of love to men; men that have sat under the teachings of the word of God from week to week and from year to year—such men wait for some forth-putting influence that shall bring them in, irrespective of their own volition.

Now this is not becoming in you. You ought long ago to have been independent of these collateral helps. There are many persons in this congregation who ought to come to the question of personal religion directly, and rise up, and go home, and say, "The question has been thought over, and has been settled: I am a Christian." Men come to me and say, "I am serious." It is an invitation for me to take them by the hand as I would a little child, who was learning to walk, and lead them, and teach them how to walk. But full-grown men, instructed from their cradle, knowing just as much of the essential truths of religion as I do myself, ought not to come to me in leading strings, nor oblige me to go to them. You ought to stand up in your households, and say to your children, "From this day forward I serve the Lord Jesus." And you ought to report yourself from the household to the church, and say, "I have chosen God's service." It is not becoming, and it is not necessary, that your neighbors should force you out, or that there should be got up for you some special excitement or summer of revival, in order that you may be willing that the ice in you should thaw out and flow down. It is in every man's power to choose the service of God, and to begin that service, and declare it to the individual, to the family, to the church. There ought not, in such a church as this, to be a month in which there should not be men and women coming to me with hope blossoming and joy effulgent, saying, "Behold what the Lord has done for me!" But as it is, men wait to be helped.

When the man that was paralytic would go down into the pool, others nimbler than he stepped down before him; and that was his plea for help. But if some great sturdy fellow that had the use of his limbs had stood round there waiting for some one to take him up and carry him into the pool, what would you have thought of him? And yet, there are multitudes of men standing around the pools of salvation; who are instructed, and who are full of power, and self-helping power, and yet no step do they take. They are waiting for some one to take them up and carry them.

My Christian brethren, this is not right or manly. This is not in the spirit of religion. Religion is designed to make you, having eyes, to employ them; and having ears, to employ them; and having a reason, to employ that; and having a moral sense, to develop that; and

having a power of choice, to enter upon the noblest choice and the highest career. And do it because this is the way that God meant we should be the most manly, and develop the most perfectly, and be most worthy of him. And when we see him as he is, we shall hear the welcome that will greet our emancipation into ever-abiding manhood in the heavenly land.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We adore thee, Almighty God. Thou hast made the heaven and the earth; thou hast created man; thou hast given him laws and ordinances, and established government; and through this government thou hast still led the race as a flock. We rejoice that thy benignity and thy patience are over all this world. Slowly as man has toiled toward knowledge, and little as he has found; much as he has degraded himself; strong as have been the passions that have borne sway; feeble as have been the impulses toward good, thou, O God! hast been unwearied. Thou hast not cast aside thy work; but with infinite patience and gentleness thou hast still educed good from evil, and by long-suffering saved the race. And we believe that thou wilt yet, in the day to come, brighter and clearer than any that have yet dawned, bring forth perfect holiness; and that the earth shall see thy salvation. For that blessed day of prediction we long. We look wearily for its signs, and behold them not; and yet we believe that the kingdom of heaven is as a leaven; and that it works in the hearts of men; and that thou art bringing to pass the counsels of thy will, though by ways which we discern not. And we rejoice that we are permitted to be laborers together with God in our individual selves; in our households; in our neighborhoods; in the nation where we dwell. We thank thee for all the mercies which thou hast vouchsafed to us through Jesus Christ our Lord; for our hope of forgiveness; for that faith which has been breathed into our hearts; and for all that expectation of immortality which cheers the dreary days of this mortal life. We thank thee for all the blessedness which we have had in times of sorrow; for the communion of the Holy Ghost; for the quickening influence of thy Spirit by which we have discerned the truth; by which we have been fortified in the hour of temptation; by which our hearts have been encouraged when fainting and failing. We rejoice in our personal hope and in our personal expectation. And we pray that thou wilt join with us, in this experience, all our children, and all others whom we love. And grant that the work of the Gospel may go from heart to heart in this congregation; and that there may be none left out; none who shall not know experimentally the love of Jesus, and who shall not have felt the power of the Spirit of God, and who shall not understand something of that life of the Spirit—the soul's higher life—by which they shall walk with God, and, though yet on the earth, hold communion with heaven.

We pray for any that are degraded; for any that are despondent; for any that are in affliction in over-measure; for any that are ridden by anxiety, and that are filled with fears. Will the Lord be gracious unto them, and spread abroad Thine hands over them, and say, Peace be unto you.

We pray for all that are in perplexity; that know not the way of duty. May they be able to discern it, and find out the right way to walk therein, and to gain strength by their intuition.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy light to shine upon all those who are teaching others. Help our Sabbath-schools and Bible-classes, both all that teach in them, and all that are taught. We pray that their souls may be knit together in the bonds of holy love.

We pray that thou wilt be with all those who go forth to seek the outcast and the neglected, and to bear the Gospel to unwonted places, where no Sabbath is, and where no teachers are. Will the Lord fill their hearts with a holy fear; and may they never be weary of their labors of love. We beseech of thee that thou wilt prepare thy servants for all the events of thy providence—for sickness; for life; for burdens; for prosperity; for disappointments; for grievous troubles. Grant that we may walk expecting

evermore thy strength in thy presence which shall be to us, in the flame or in the flood alike, strength, and succor, and release.

Bless, we pray thee, the churches that are gathered of every name this day. May the Spirit of the Lord be in the midst of them all. And we pray for thy servants that preach, that they may be made to discern the truth, and have fervor given them that the truth may be as good seed sown in good soil. We pray for the day when there shall be no more divisions; when each man shall be content to let each worship God according to the dictates of his conscience; and when men shall love those that are apart from them.

Grant that the spirit of undying love may spread, and that sympathy may take the place of persecution, and that thy name may be honored in all the forms in which men are seeking to do thy will. We pray that thou wilt bless the nations of the earth, and bring in that day so long waiting and so long needed, of final and universal peace, when men shall no longer wage war, nor provoke the causes of it; and when love shall supersede anger and cruelty, and mercy shall fill the earth.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt let the truth sink down into our hearts, and abide there. May we never be the believers of cunningly devised fables. May we be filled with the spirit of manliness. May we be gentle. May we be fair-minded. May we be amiable—not arrogant nor vain. May we desire to know what is truth. Grant that we may desire our true selves more than everything else—more than houses or lands; more than honor; more than fame; more than all pleasures. May we desire to be built up in the essential elements of a true and Christian manhood, that we may be presented before the throne not unworthy of the divine Eye, O ,eternal Father! when we shall be perfected without spot or blemish, or any such thing.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant, then, thy Spirit, which coerces none, but helps all, and which sweetly shines as the sun. And like the sun, may it bring forth all pleasant plants of righteousness in the garden of the Lord.

Revive thy work in the hearts of all those that already have known thee, but have forgotten thee; and of those that follow thee but afar off; and of those that are cumbered with care; and of those that are cankered with passion; and of those that are bewildered and lost in the maze of the world. Oh! that all might hear thee calling to them, and rise up, and in their plenary power accept thy service, and love thee, and rejoice in the glorious hope of immortality.

And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

THE ERA OF JOY.

"And the angels said unto them, Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."—Luke ii., 10, 11.

This is the only day of the year consecrated purely to joy. We care not what the ecclesiastical origin of the Christmas Day was, nor what notions have environed it in other times. In itself it is the day for the celebration of joy. There are many days celebrated in all nations to commemorate important events in the history of those nations. There are days of thanksgiving to God, or of joyfulness, as the expression of gratitude for the history of single years, or for great deliverances, or for eminent blessings conferred. But Christians all the world over, on this day, whatever language they speak, under what government soever they live, join to celebrate it as the day of joy. It does not yet appeal to the whole population of the globe; but the time shall come when every tribe, and tongue, and nation, and people, in every island, and on every continent, shall join together to celebrate this one columnar day of joy. All the world eastward has been, and is still, aroused; and all the world westward as the progress of the sun goes on, is being aroused to the celebration of this day. Whatever men believe respecting Christ, when they analyze their thought and feeling they agree that this advent is to be hailed with joy. Whether he be angelic, or divine, or very God, or only eminent man, his coming is universally admitted to have been a fact of supreme importance in the history of the world.

The angel proclaimed joy to the shepherds, and declared to them that it should be a joy to all people. The priest in the temple predicted joy to the wondering parents; and Jesus himself, among his earliest words, represented himself as the one predicted to right the wrong, to expel cruelty and suffering, and to bring light, liberty, and peace to the world.

This day, therefore, celebrates an era of joy; and the whole Christian world to-day makes itself happy—or should. One day there is of

SUNDAY MORNING, Dec. 25, 1870. LESSON: LUKE ii. 1-20. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 215, 212, 200.

the three hundred and sixty-five, set apart, not only for joyfulness, but to remind the world that the true religion bears joy as its ripest fruit.

It will then be some benefit, I hope, if I take the occasion of this day to speak upon *the joy-producing power of Christianity.*

Continuous joy in any faculty indicates the highest condition of health in that faculty; and continuous joy in every part of the mind will be the sign, when it shall take place, of perfection in that mind. For although, as we are accustomed to regard it, pleasure or joy is not the sign of goodness, yet in the larger analysis, and in a higher way of looking at it, it may be said that the power of continuous joy in any faculty is the sign of perfect health in that faculty; and that the power of continuous joy in all the soul is the evidence that the soul itself is in a state of perfectness, and that joy is the test. Not low measures, not occasional joys, not collateral and incidental flushes of this experience, but the power of the man's nature to work it out steadfastly, is the sign and token of perfectness in part and in whole. It is therefore the final test of excellence. The capacity of fullness is the ultimate end of being: not the aim of the present, which is a developing period; but the ultimate end.

The possibility of joy continually and in the whole soul is conditioned, however, upon a state of perfect development and training which will be intermediate, and whose experience will not be like the experience of the final and ripe state. We have now only the language of education—an education in which there is much incidental suffering: yet all suffering is but the chisel's edge shaping an uncouth block to the forms of beauty and to the proportions of grace.

Let us ask, then, first, What is Christianity itself, that is said to have this power of producing joy, and whose legitimate and characteristic fruit is joy? Historically and narrowly considered, Christianity is the system made up by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. That merely tells us, however, where the name came from, and what in general are the instruments. In a larger statement, Christianity is that system of influence, which was designed of God, and which is destined to educate the whole human race to perfect manhood. It is that whole system of influences of every kind whatsoever, whether evolved heretofore, or now developing, or yet to be unfolded, by which God designs to perfect the individual and the race into manhood. It is the divine education of the race to its full capacity.

This is Christianity. It was indicated by Christ, who was the supremest Teacher in this great system. It takes its name worthily from him. But all of Christianity was not taught by Christ. Its seed forms, its germs, were all in Him; but the unfolding, as He himself declared, belonged to a later period.

"The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed."

He said to his disciples,

"I have many things to say unto you; but ye cannot bear them now."

There was a vast amount of truth that lay coiled and folded in the mind of Jesus that was not spoken.

Not, then, merely the historical facts of the Gospel, but all the vast facts of creation when they shall have grown and been unfolded through time; the whole scheme, for instance, of the natural globe, or the material world; the whole evolution of divine providence in human society; the whole work of civilization as it shall take place under the divine guidance—all of this belongs to Christianity.

The definition of Christianity is found, not in the instruments, but in the thing for which the instruments are employed. The perfect manhood of the race in Christ Jesus—that is Christianity. Christianity is not to be sought for in its doctrines, nor in its ordinances, nor in its institutions, by which it secures certain things. It is to be sought for in the things which these doctrines, ordinances, and institutions secure, or work out. That is the final condition of the nature of man himself. Just as fast as the ages find out then any truths or any processes which, applied to man, lift him toward God, all these truths newly developed, and all these processes newly evolved fall into the ranks and become a part of Christianity. For Christianity is the final sum of all influences that tend to produce a perfect manhood in the race.

The design of Christianity was announced by Christ; and great elementary tendencies were established or developed; but it was not pretended, it was not taught, it was not even intimated, that the whole of Christianity was made known at that time. The whole creation is God's, and therefore Christ's. The world was made by him, "and without him was not anything made that was made." And all things were made, in the whole globe, and in all its history, to converge, and through the ages in long sequences to work out that which after all is the sum and substance and heart of Christianity—the purification, the elevation, and the sanctification of the manhood of the world. And all that goes toward the development of true manhood, and the elevation of the race, whether we have just learned it, or whether it was known in the apostolic day, belongs to Christianity. Men go back to the apostles, as if things were perfect in proportion as they go back. You might just as well go back to acorns for timber for ships, on the supposition that the further you go back toward the seed the nearer you come to timber. Christianity was never so imperfect as when Christ himself lived; and the Christianity of the world was never so narrow as when the apostles handled it. The perfection of Christianity is not in its seed-form, but in its blossoms and in its fruit; and they come with the generations hereafter, when not single ones, nor sections, nor handfuls,

nor first-fruits are being developed by the power of these great agencies, but when nations shall be born in a day, and when races shall be knit together, and all of them shall be lifted up by the final form of divine influence into perfect manhood. And it is the realization of this great conception of a world's manhood that is the aim of Christianity; and this is that which it is working toward, and with a larger and larger volume of truth and of influence, through every successive great period of time.

The passage which I have often quoted, and which I shall never quote enough, in Philippians, embraces the same idea:

"Whatsoever things are true."

He has been telling a great many things that are true, and unfolding them; and he then says, "But not these alone—*whatever* things are true. When men have thought; when new philosophies have arisen; when controversies have cleared the chaff from the wheat; when, after ten thousand years of unfolding nature and the development of man in civil society, and all probings and experiments, shall have brought around a glorious circle of truth, so that there shall be a thousand stars where once there was but one in the horizon, whatsoever is true—all that belongs to Christianity." That is the meaning of the whole passage:

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things,"

— ponder, accept, these things. In the long flight of years, as God shall, on the one and on the other side, ripen new fruits, develop new intelligences, bring forth sweeter harmonies of social life, lift up the standard more and more, men are not to stand carping and saying, "Your Christianity did well enough for the old time; but it is outgrown. There are better things now than the old Christianity ever brought into the world." Paul says, "Christianity does not mean just the things that I have attained. It is not limited to just the things that I am telling you. It includes the ever-increasing evolution by which God means to complete the development of the race, on the whole globe, in all periods of time. And whatever is true is of Christ; and whatever is just, or ever shall be; and whatever is pure, or ever shall be; and whatever is beautiful, or of good-report among men—be in a mood, if you have any virtue or any sensibility, to accept that as a part of your fealty to Christ, and of your faith in God." That was the apostle's creed; and that is the creed which goes on forever augmenting, never abandoning the old, knitting the future to the past, and still making new discoveries—not discoveries of new truths, but of new blossoms on old branches.

Now it can be made intelligible how the joy which is the aim of Christianity may be really that which was predicted by the angels to all people; and how Christianity itself is a state designed to produce joy; and yet, how sorrow, which is the instrument largely employed in producing it, may still fill so large a place as it has filled in the history of the world. For when men say that Christianity tends to produce joy, we are instantly pointed to the wretched condition of things which exists; and men say, "Two thousand years! and where is your joyfulness?" Men say, "Christianity produce joy? Have there ever been such bloody wars as Christianity has produced? Have there ever been such quarreling and dissensions as Christianity has produced? Where is your joy? Besides," they say, "though these flighty angels may have said something about joy, what did the Master himself say? He said, 'Take up your cross and follow me.' He said, 'In this world ye shall suffer tribulation.' What saith the Scripture? It says 'They that will live godly shall suffer persecution.'" And therefore it strikes the sad ear of those that are despondent, or of those that look only on one side of this question, very strangely, when I declare that it is the aim of Christianity to produce joy; when I say that Christianity is the joy-producing state of the universe.

But I do not say that it instantly produces joy. I do not say that it produces joy always. I do not say that it is not subject to the perversions which belong to the whole scheme of this life. I merely say that it is attempting to work in man such a growth and such a development as shall bring him into the capacity and into the condition in which joy shall be the natural end of each faculty, and of the whole of the faculties. While he is being educated into it I concede that there is much suffering; but it is not suffering for the sake of suffering. It is not aimless, void and useless suffering. It is a suffering which chastises disobedience into obedience; which transforms faults into virtues; which discharges the dross, and brings out the pure gold. That is the divine idea of suffering in the world.

The woman of the house says, "I will have neatness in this household." And behold her on her knees on the floor (I am speaking of the old-fashioned times); and behold the floor all covered with dirt and soap and water; and behold the man that wanted neatness wading for his life, as it were, through the flood of suds and filth. And yet, through dirt she does get neatness. First comes the scrubbing; and after the scrubbing comes the dry and cleanly floor. And so it is with all processes of cleansing or polishing. Brilliance is what is wanted on the shield. And so it is burnished. But the substances by which that brilliance is brought out are blackening and disfiguring.

The workman's period is not always the enjoying period. It is

after the workman has let go that the quality of joy is made to appear.

We all believe that intelligence is more pleasurable than ignorance; and yet, the process of getting intelligence is not always so very pleasant. The grammars and the dictionaries have a sad story to tell when they reveal their secrets; and the process of being licked into wisdom from the condition of blockheadism is not a very agreeable process. Dark and stormy and toilsome is the road through which one must pass before he reaches the goal of intelligence.

Who doubts that the physician's end is health. That is what he is seeking; and who doubts that he seeks it by very loathsome and nauseous passages and processes? Medicine, though its immediate result is painful, has for its design perfect enjoyment.

Everything in this world is born by labor-throes; and afterward every successive stage of development in this world is born by labor-throes. And pain is God's midwife, that helps some virtue into existence, or some noble trait into a true living. Therefore, if pain and suffering have not been understood, if their reign has been prolonged, if they tend to wear out strength and activity, it is because they have not been studied scientifically in the light of the word of God; it is because they have been misused, or greatly abused. I believe that throughout God's universal realm pain is the minister of mercy, and that the truth which is declared in Hebrews is a truth as universal as the divine government, where it is said,

"No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby"—

in them that are disciplined; in those that know how to use it. That is the tendency of suffering. That is its function. Never for the present is chastisement joyous: it is grievous; but afterward you get the end, the object of it.

Now, it cannot be doubted that the progress of Christianity in this world has been very much checked, that its development has been very much restricted, by the ignorance of men. But the mere allegation that the existence in this life of Christianity has been for the production of suffering and sorrow, is no argument against the fact that Christianity is a joy-producing power in the world, that it is the instrument of joy, and that it will complete and accomplish its end.

If it be said, therefore, in Scripture, "Take up thy cross and follow me," it is because no man can follow Christ—that is, rise into the higher states of his own being—except by denying the lower ones. And the cross is always laid on the animal, and not on the spiritual. No man takes his cross up on his conscience; no man takes his cross up on his faith or hope; no man puts his cross on love. It is on pride; it is on selfishness; it is on the lower force-giving faculties or animal

appetites, that the cross is put, in order that the higher faculties may predominate, and the lower ones serve. For if we take the cross of Christ, taking it, we follow him with greater joy than it would be possible for us to attain if we did not take it.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation."

Yes, but it is that we may have greater joy that we suffer tribulation. Hence, the difference between joy proclaimed and joy realized in the world, is accounted for simply because the world is on the way toward a perfect joy. The day has not yet dawned for the complete accomplishment of it, because the race has not been developed by suffering up to that point in which joy is possible. There have been many religions which have made men much more joyful than Christianity has; but they played upon the nature just as it was, and never sought to change it. The religion of the Greeks was a gay and festive religion. They wreathed themselves with flowers; they anointed themselves with sweet perfumes; they surrounded their temples with every attraction; they invoked every pleasure that they could think of; they sought to make the hour of their worship a beautiful and charming hour. They sought joy without seeking manhood. Theirs was a religion which took men just where they were, and left them where they were, and wrung out of them all the joy that there was in them at that point of development—and that was all.

But Christianity takes men, and says, "Ye are capable of mightier things than these," and so begins to open up the nature, to accord the nature, to discipline the nature, and make manhood vaster with the volume of joy by and by wrung out of their faculties—so vast that it shall transcend immeasurably that which was possible in the beginning, or at the earlier stages.

It is a great comfort to me, that have looked with so much sympathy upon the whole long requiem of time past, and upon the groaning and travailing in pain until now that is in the world, to believe, as I do heartily believe, that the future of Christianity is to be far brighter, and that the day of struggle is comparatively past.

Do you remember that Christmas day is the first day in the year in which the days begin to lengthen? On the twenty-first, the twenty-second, the twenty-third and the twenty-fourth of December they are substantially at a stand still; but on the twenty-fifth of December, the hand of the poetic year cuts one lock from the head of darkness and hangs it like a star on the forehead of the day; and to-day is a minute longer than yesterday. And the sun will not go back now. It has set its face toward the summer; and though there are going to be great storms in January; though vast shrouds of snow will cover the ground, yet you know and I know that the sun has gone to its furthest

limit, and has begun to turn back; and that just as sure as nature is constant in her career, that sun is retracing his steps with summer in his bosom, and that there are fruits, and there are flowers, and there is a whole realm of joy, coming. You have no doubt of this in the natural world.

And I say that though the days of the world's winter are not over, yet I believe that the Sun of righteousness has gone as far away as it ever will, and has turned, and is coming back; and that there is to be a future summer of joy and rejoicing in things spiritual as well as in things temporal.

But while this grand education is evolving, we must not think that joy is absent wholly; and we must not pass by too generically and summarily what has actually been gained by Christianity in the production of joy in this world. It has not been idle. We are apt to remember the dark days, and to forget the bright ones. There has been a long line of joyful witnesses in the world. First was Christ himself, who is not misinterpreted in any other point more, I think, than in the supposition that his life was one of sorrow. There can be no question that there were moods of profound sorrow in the life of Christ, and that toward the last month of his life he was in a travail of spirit. And that he suffered at the end of it, there can be no doubt. But the earliest period of Christ's life I suppose to have been a transcendently joyful one. I believe that as a child, and as a young man, in his father's family, and under the nourishing care of his mother, there is no hint or sign or token that his life was not tranquil and sweet and pleasant to him. And there is unequivocal evidence that after he came into his ministry, and during the first years of his ministration, the life that he led was peaceful and happy. Either all moral laws must be set aside, and that without any necessity or any testimony to the contrary, or else a life in which one in perfect health, and in the consciousness of perfect power, and with the ability to work miracles of mercy, and going from day to day in the midst of crowds of untaught men, receiving their admiration and gratitude, and still conferring blessings, and saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive"—either all moral laws must be set aside, or else under such circumstances he must have been joyful. All Judea was one scene of wild uproar and ecstasy. Here were villages without a sick man in them; for he had passed through them. The lame were made to walk; the blind were made to see; the deaf were made to hear; the very dead were brought to life; and households were re-illuminated that had sat in darkness and in the shadow of death. And from day to day there could be no place large enough to contain the immense throngs that came around about this divine Person. And he says, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." See

the mother going ecstatic from him! Is it more blessed to give than to receive? How happy he was then! See the lepers going away from him rejoicing and chanting God's goodness! But he was happier than the lepers. He enjoyed more than the blind did that he made to see; and more than the deaf did that he made to hear; and more than the dumb did that he made to speak; and more than separated friends did who received from the gulf of death to their arms, by the divine power, their own again.

The mother at Nain whose son came back from death when Christ touched his bier—who can measure the hours of ecstasy, who can measure the days of joy, which she experienced at home, after that event? But he was happier than she. Tell me that Christ was unhappy! He was the most notable exemplification of joy that the world has ever had. I do not believe that there has ever been so happy a man. And he looked forward to the coming time. He lived for the future joy. For it is said of him,

"Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the shame."

It did not count on him. And you know that the apostles declared themselves the offscouring of the world. They died deaths daily. They were expatriated. They had no fixed home. They had nothing that men usually call elements of happiness. And yet, I will defy you to find in literature, ancient or modern, so high a tone of cheerfulness, so healthy a spirit, so sound an one, as you will find portrayed both in the Gospels, and in the history of the apostles. You cannot find one morbid place, nor one that tends to morbidity, in them. The most illustrious literature of the globe is that of these persecuted, outcast, wandering men—God's vagabonds. And do you tell me that joy had no fruit where such men were raised to leave such a magnificent symphony of joy?

And since the days of the apostles, although there have been multitudes of men nominally Christians who have, after all, been very little developed spiritually, yet there have been many better natures, many of the higher sort of men, who have been lifted up into that sphere where joy abode with them. Peace, which is the synonym for the harmonies of joy, has never been absent from the holy men of this world; and there is a long line of witnesses that witness of things peaceful and joyful. There is the witness of the martyr. There is the witness of men that have laid down their lives for the faith. But there is yet to be a revelation of what Christianity has done for the internal man—a witness of perfect joy, and of perfect peace. We shall not know it until the other life, except by snatches, and little insights here and there in the fragmentary lives of these holy men. But still, the whole

range of joy throughout the world has been augmented and elevated. I think that the civilized world never was so happy in ancient times as it is now—relatively, I mean, compared with what civilization is now doing. If you go back two thousand years, even, you will find it to be so. Men like to praise old times. They like to praise, for instance, the good old hearty days of England before King Henry VIII. reigned, when there was simplicity, and when there was a rude yeomanry virtue, and when men were gay and happy. I tell you that, were you to take these men up, and carry them back there, and let them sleep where men slept then, and let them eat what men ate then, and let them do what men had to do then, and take away from them what men did not have then, but do have now, you would hear the most piteous moaning and whining and complaining that ever afflicted your ears. For we have grown in the number of enjoyments, in the refinements of sensibility, in the realization of life, in all the sweet elements that go to constitute satisfaction in life. No pen can record, no tongue can tell, the growth that has been made in five hundred years. The world is steadily growing. You are to remember one thing, and that is, that one of the signs of development is the increase of sensibility. But the increase of sensibility is also the increase of the element of suffering. Every one that is really lifted higher in the scale of existence is in the situation to feel more acutely the remaining evils. And men are disturbed, not in proportion to the blessings which they have or do not have, but in proportion to the evils that yet remain uncorrected and unremoved of the lower or the animal form of suffering. A condition of things which to-day would revolutionize this nation, our forefathers considered so blessed that they gave thanks for it. The days of thanksgiving of one thousand years ago, carried forward a thousand years, would be days of revolution, because it would be considered so low and imperfect a thanksgiving that men could not endure it and would not stand it—and that, too, in the very process of unfolding and of reformation. So that while we hear a great deal of the sufferings of this world, we are not to forget that the enjoyment of the race, its capacity to enjoy, the number of faculties that do enjoy, and the higher elements of those faculties, are actually increased. While the race was an acid race when Christ found them, they are a sugar race, comparatively speaking, now. They secrete a hundred times as much of the saccharine principle as they did.

When men make wines of the juices of different sorts of grapes, they test them for two elements. They test them first for sugar. The best wine is made from those grapes which contain the most sugar. They also test them for acid. The acid-bearing grapes produce the poorest wine ; and their juices have to be purified most.

Now, men are to be tested in a similar way. If you test men of antiquity, you will find that they produced a vast amount of acid, and but little sugar; but if you test men that have been long under the influence of those things which promote Christian development, you will find that they produce a great deal of sugar and very little acid. So that in the mosaic of history, the wine produced from the juices expressed from the grapes of later generations, is far better moral wine than that produced from the juices expressed from the grapes of antiquity. What joys they had in the earliest ages were near the animal line. The joys that they had then were very imperfectly developed. But our life has gone up. As animals, we are far better fed than they were. As civilians we live in a far opener and freer and larger life. As cultivated beings, as philosophers—in other words, as men that derive their pleasure not from sense, but from sensibility and from the moral sentiments—we have a hundred avenues through which we are drawing supplies where antiquity had one. And if Seneca had lived in our day he would have written amatory poetry, instead of the lugubrious maxims that he did write in his day, shut up in the narrow cell of an undeveloped period. Men in this day write a poetry of love, bright and clear, while in the olden times men wrote poetry that was sour, dark and gloomy. The whole world is better off, with all its discords. Not only is it better off, but it is getting still better off from hundreds of years to hundreds of years—croakers to the contrary, notwithstanding.

The elevation of Christian households has greatly augmented the actual happiness of the world, and opened a horizon still more magnificent for the time to come. The average condition of the common people of Christendom is far higher than formerly it was, and is still rising. So that while we are saying that Christianity ultimately will produce more joy, we must not forget that it is doing much by the way. We must remember that while by suffering, by attrition, by various things that produce burdens more or less, Christianity is taking the race up to a higher joy, on the road also are first fruits of that joy. And the world is better off to-day than it was at any five hundred years previous. The future is growing brighter and brighter. All real gains now make future gains.

It is with moral elements as it is with financial matters. The first hundred dollars which a poor man earns, and keeps clear from every claim, so as to use it for business, costs him more labor than afterwards it will cost him to earn a hundred thousand dollars. When Vanderbilt first ran a packet boat between Staten Island and New York, it cost him more to get twenty-five dollars than now it does to get twenty-five million, in the way that he gets his money. And it is so in moral things.

Early stages are the hard ones; but as you go on, and on, it grows easier and easier.

I believe I have not used it for four or five years, though I often used it before that time—the figure that Agassiz uses; namely, that the growth of a plant is in three stages: first, by the root, which is invisible, and is the slowest and longest; second, by the stem, which is accelerated, and perhaps not half as long; and third, by maturation or ripening, which is the quickest of all. The root takes a great while to grow; the stem takes a little less time; and when these two have become developed, they rush to the blossom, and through the blossom to the fruit. And the last of the three periods is the shortest.

So it is in history. The earlier stages are very slow; the intermediate stages are far faster; and the final or ripening stages are very rapid.

Now, as the past has been largely occupied by root-growth in moral things, and as the present may be considered the period of growth by the stem, so I think we are standing on the eve of the period of growth by maturation and ripening. And when the world has entered upon this last period, then things will go forward with greater strides. Then the steps will be quicker and quicker, and the fruits will be more abundant.

It is to me, therefore, a very joyful thought for Christmas day, not only that we have a religion which is joy-producing in its ultimate fruits, but that which, looked upon comprehensively, has already produced vast cycles of joy, and raised the tone of joy throughout the world, and is going forward, not having half expended its force yet, to an era in which joy-producing shall be more apparent, and upon a vaster scale, and with more exquisite fruit, and in infinite variety.

While, then, to-day, we celebrate the coming of Christ, and give thanks to God for the advent of the Saviour; while we also recount the blessings which in our several experiences, and in our happy families, have come from our adhesion to Christ, or from our birth and education in a Christian land, and under Christian influences, let us lift up our eyes, and, if we can, enter into sympathy with God, who, sitting upon the circle of the earth, looks at all the races, and has in his sympathy and in his heart the welfare of the lowest savage as well as the highest philosopher. And let us with him rejoice that the time past is nearly sufficient in which the world has wrought the will of the flesh, that the days of the flesh are fast passing, that the days of the understanding and the days of moral sentiment are coming quick, and that the whole earth is nearing the period of its final deliverance, when the new heaven and the new earth in which dwell righteousness shall come, and Christ shall dwell with men, and they shall be his people.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We rejoice, our heavenly Father, for all the mercies which have come to us through the knowledge of thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus, the anointed. We rejoice in the ministration of mercy which he hath begotten, and which hath been in the world, working mightily, though secretly, and which still doth work. We rejoice that the revelation of the mercy of God is growing with the ages, and that God's goodness is God's omnipotence, and that God's wisdom is the power of loving and the mightiness of love that doth shape all things, and cause them in the end to conform to rectitude. We rejoice that more and more thou art preparing men to receive the mystery of divine life into their own souls, and that in every age more and more are rising up, and that the whole race doth seem to rise and follow, though with unequal steps. And we rejoice though the work is prolonged beyond our ignorant expectation, and though there is mystery yet in the evolution of things, and though by searching we can neither find them out to perfection, nor thy wondrous works among men, that our faith moves with firmer and firmer steps toward thy being, and thy wisdom, and thy goodness in thine actual power in the affairs of men; and that the destiny of the races, and of the earth itself, is more and more clear, though we cannot descry it in particulars, and though it hangs like the light in the horizon. Like the light, it portends that the night is past, and that the day is at hand. And we rejoice with joy unspeakable, at times, and full of glory.

And now we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that every one of us may accept Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour. May we learn to love him, not as he walked in Jerusalem, not as he taught in Galilee, but as the ever-living Saviour at the right hand of God; as our companion that from above sways all things, and dwells in all that open their hearts to receive him; as known in providence, moving through all the ways of nature, and controlling still the world that was made by him.

Grant that our Saviour may be a living one, so that we may feel, in the solitude of the night, or away from all companionship other, that we have One that is near to us whose ear can hear our faintest cry; whose heart echoes every sorrow of our heart; who knows us altogether; before whom we are open and naked. And grant that we may draw near as to a merciful High-priest, whose offices toward us are offices of mercy, to rescue us from pain and ignorance, and to rescue us from the penalty of our own passions, and to deliver us from the thrall of ignorance, and from the bondage of fear, and from all remorse, and to work in us mightily a true birth of true living, so that we may become the sons of God, and be exalted by adoption into the household of faith, and become of the family of God, heirs of heaven, heirs and joint-heirs with Jesus to an eternal inheritance therein.

Grant, we pray thee, that every one that has known thy name, and revered it in days past, may to-day have a fresh baptism, and be able to accept again, with more gladness and heartiness, the service of the Saviour. And may those that are just beginning to walk, as babes learning their first steps, be surrounded with more than paternal tenderness from on high, and be borne in the arms of divine mercy, if they cannot carry themselves. May they feel that God surrounds them with infinite gentleness and tenderness and carefulness. May they not be afraid, but may they put their whole trust in him, and be sure that he will keep that which they have committed to him unto the day of redemption. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt draw many that have wandered from the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls back again to the knowledge of their childhood, and to the faith of their fathers. May they learn the simplicity of holy obedience. May they learn

to live for thee. May they discern invisible things, and know the power of the world to come. May they become friends with thee, consecrated in a new and eternal bond of friendship. May they begin that new life which shall have immortality for its blossom.

And we pray, O Lord! that thou wilt bless all the labors of thy servants that endeavor through the year to cultivate in men the knowledge of Christ, and the graces of the Christian life. Open their understanding, that they may have a true conception, from day to day, themselves, of the way of holiness. Give them faith; give them patience; give them strength. May they not be weary of well doing. Even when they go forth sowing seed, precious seed, with tears, may they be sure that they shall come again, by and by, with their bosom filled with sheaves.

We pray, O Lord! that thou wilt grant that those that are showing mercy to the outcast, and searching out the dark and ignorant ones, and going out to the wanderers, may themselves experience new consecration, and the divine blessing, from day to day. Fulfill to them all the promise that they shall be watered themselves that water others.

And we pray, O Lord! that thy name may be known and honored in all thy Churches more and more. And may thy people that are happily drawing nearer together learn yet more of concord and less of conflict. And we pray that thou wilt hasten the time when all Churches, of every name, shall love thee so much that they shall be able to love each other. Grant that that which is Christ's may seem inestimably precious to all the disciples of Christ. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt unite men in heart that in outward things may still be separated.

We pray for the advance of thy kingdom; for the spread of the knowledge of Christ in the desolate parts of the earth, where no man hath yet lifted up the standard of the Cross. There may the voice of the preacher be heard. Throughout the dark places of the earth, and in the habitations of cruelty, may there be the spirit of wisdom, and the witness of the Spirit of God in the hearts of men.

Hasten the day predicted, when knowledge shall run to and fro through all the earth. May superstition perish. May ignorance depart before intelligence, as the darkness of the night before the morning. And grant that nations may torment nations no more; that justice, peace and mercy may prevail everywhere; and the whole earth see thy salvation.

We ask it in Christ's name. *Amen.*

INTENSITY OF SPIRIT.

"Lord, help me."—Matt. xv., 25.

How lightly that phrase drops from the lips of thousands who, when pressed by a little care, or vexed by some intemperate act, are accustomed, as it were, to fling it toward the sky! How often we invoke the name of God for our most pitiful needs, and how often we avoid it in the profoundest depths of our necessity! They cannot imagine the intensity of this simple petition in this remarkable history, who have never themselves suffered, and been wrung with suffering. For this is a portion of one of the most striking incidents in the life of Jesus.

Only once during his active ministry did he go out of the bounds of Palestine, in so far as we know; and this was the time. He proceeded north from Galilee; and, turning toward his left, went on near to the Mediterranean Sea, in the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon. It is not stated that he entered either of those cities, although it is possible. It is said that he *came into their borders*, which would seem to imply that he only approached that populous district which usually lies around about the vicinity of cities. It seems to have been his desire to preach once, at least, in every portion of Palestine and of its immediate vicinity where his countrymen were to be found, and to make known to them this new spiritual kingdom.

He made three entire circuits, apparently, of the whole of Palestine; and of Galilee some eight or ten circuits. There were many Jews in this vicinity. Already they had become commercial adventurers, and had flocked to large cities and sea-ports. The Jews had gone out into the Greek cities of Asia Minor; they had penetrated perhaps even to Italy, and to Rome, and to Damascus; and all the great cities east were full of them. They had gone down to Egypt. They were the Yankees of antiquity in Palestine and Alexandria. So populous had they become, and so rich, that there they had built a new temple—the only duplication of the temple in Jerusalem that I know of. And everywhere their synagogues and their schools were found.

SUNDAY MORNING, Jan. 1, 1871. LESSON: LUKE xviii. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 286, 130.

For, chiefest of all nations of antiquity, the Jews believed in education, and everywhere made provision for what to them was equivalent to our common schools; and more nearly like these schools than those in any other nation of olden times, and I might say than in most nations of modern times, was their system of educating the common people.

Our Lord seems to have gone toward Tyre and Sidon, following the track of his countrymen, and preaching the kingdom as he went. It seems that he did not desire publicity—at least not now and here. For it is said,

"He entered into an house, and would have no man know it, but he could not be hid."

His fame preceded him. The enthusiasm that went with him was like a fire, and caught material everywhere for new flame and fervor. While he was thus hiding himself and resting, there came to him a native woman of mixed blood—"a woman of Canaan," it is said—that is, a woman of the Canaanites; "a Greek," again it is said; "a Syrophœnician," it is said in another place; in other words, a woman who lived in these Phœnician cities, and had a Greek parent (probably a Greek mother), and was of the people of the land on the other side,—came to him. Her errand was one of maternal love. Her daughter was subject to demoniac possessions. Her first appearance was with this outcry:

"Have mercy upon me, O Lord, thou son of David!"

This may seem a strange salutation from one of a Gentile nation. It was the Jew that would naturally have addressed to Christ that peculiar title, "Thou Son of David," which carried in it the intimation of royalty; but doubtless she had seen Christ, and had heard the throng speak of him; and, with the ready wit of an earnest heart, seeking favor, doubtless she thought that that was the title which perhaps would win favor for her. And so she, though a Gentile, and knowing little of who David was, and hearing others speaking of him as of that royal lineage, approached him with this intended compliment:

"Have mercy upon me, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil."

Is there another plea imaginable more potent with God than that of a mother pleading for a daughter? What depths of love! What depths of anguish! And in this case, what anxious days and nights! What hopes and fears! What long waiting! And now, in the height of her distress, comes the man who is filling the land with the fame of his miracles of healing. Before all others, surely, he will address his mercy to this case, when a mother pleads for a daughter, that a demon may be cast out of her.

Strange contrast! He met her outcry without one single word or

look of sympathy. Had he no pity? Did he not care for the sufferer? "He answered her not a word," is the record.

"Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. And he answered her not a word."

Was he so worn out with labor that his susceptibility slept? or did he not care for her because she was a Gentile?

There was evidently a considerable period of seeming indifference during which the Saviour must have denied her passionate appeal; for his disciples, often officious in their care of him, came to him, and besought him, saying,

"Send her away; for she crieth after us."

He replies, enigmatically, that his mission is to his own countrymen.

"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

This seems to be a justifying of himself by appealing to the prejudices of his disciples in favor of their own people, as distinguished from Gentiles. It sounds, too, very strangely, when we consider that he came to die for the world, and that his whole ministry was a continual protest against this very Jewish narrowness, but in favor of universal charity. He seems here to appeal to that very Jewish prejudice, and that very national exclusiveness, which it was one of the chief objects of his mission to overcome.

So then, it is plain to be seen that this was a drama. We all know that it must have been. It was very unlike the popular idea of Christ's habits which now exists, and entirely like his real habits, which were not always merely literal and direct. It is supposed that the Lord Jesus, in his earthly carriage and teaching and intercourse, was as simple, and as transparent, and as level, as a man could be. Because he was pure, and because he was gentle, people think that he was flat. Nothing can be more untrue. No being was ever more mutable, more changeable, with every mood and variety; no being ever opened up more richly and more strangely; no being could be less presumed of. You could presume less in regard to him than in regard to almost any other one, as to what he would say, and what he would do, and how he would demean himself, from what you had seen the day before. Of infinite variety that never staled, nor was in danger of it, Christ's whole career afforded an eminent example. He often hid his nature. He often put forward what seemed to be mere tentative appearances, and drew them back again upon occasion. As a mother plays with her child by a thousand devices, so played he with men's thoughts and feelings and fancies. He played with the meanings of words. He dealt in enigmas, in paradoxes, in dark sayings. He was full of variety.

His teaching and his conduct were not only various, but full of hidings and surprises.

So it was in this instance. It was a notable instance of that genius and tendency of our Saviour. It is plain that he held this woman off that her heart might develop a greater intensity, and that there might spring up before his disciples, as it were, a new problem in moral life. It was not only for the sake of her benefit, but for the sake of its effect upon others, that he took this course. He would have her manifest an intensity of faith of which she would not be capable under ordinary circumstances, and which could not be expected except by some such process as this. Here was escape for the woman's child, and she knew it; and she seemed likely to lose it; and love wrought courage and sublime importunity. For she drew near, and bowed herself to the ground reverentially (for this is the meaning of *worshiped him*), and put her heart's life into the simple words, "Lord, help me!"

Jesus spake—but not yet even sympathetically. He spake as a cold and haughty Jew would. He said, in words that sounded very harsh to her,

"Let the children first be filled; for it is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it unto the dogs."

But he knew as well as you and I know, that mercy to the Gentiles would abstract nothing from mercy to the Jews. Still, this spiritual drama ran on.

A mother's love has in it all courage, all patience, all humility, all faith; and although she was called a Gentile, although she was an outsider, although she was arraigned apparently as inferior to the Jews, although she was likened to the dogs, yet, listen to the sweetness and the beauty of her answer to Christ's declaration that it was not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs. She said,

"Truth, Lord; yet the little dogs [for it is that in the original] eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."

And now, with sweet spirit, with yielding, without anger, her persistent importunity having made itself fully manifest, he turned to her and said,

"O woman! great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."

Have you not seen the whole summer's day go over with clouds in the sky, deep, dark, full of the threat of storms; but as the evening drew near and the winds shifted to the south and to the west, have you not seen streak across the horizon a line of light, which, becoming wider and wider, spread up into the heavens; and ere a half hour have you not seen the whole heavens shine radiant, and the sunbeams bathe the world again, and make hill and valley and all nature rejoice? So.

in the early part of her interview all was sad and dark and repulsive; but ere long the love of Christ's heart broke forth, and dissipated all that seemed gloomy and forbidding, and all was joy and peace.

A variety of thoughts, suggested for our profit, are to be derived from this narrative:

1. Gifts that come to us from the outside, procured by another, though they may be precious, and may bring to us joy and profit, are after all not to be compared with those gifts which come to us through the arousing of our own inward nature. Had our Saviour, when this woman made petition, at once granted her request, it would have been a great boon to her. Had he healed her child by a word, and passed on, that child would have bloomed in the household, and the mother would never have forgotten the work of mercy which had been wrought for her; and yet, after all, she herself never would have been as large as she must have been after that interview. By mercies that are wrought out and brought in their entireness to us, and then passed over into our own hands, we having had no agency in the procuring of them—by such mercies we are less blessed than when our friends are kind to us through our own activity in such a way as to raise up and educate and thoroughly strengthen that which is good within us. The soul-power is manhood. He who blesses you in body or in estate is not to be considered less than a benefactor; but he who blesses your manhood is your best friend. He who has a heart of affection towards you, so that it cultivates affection in you; he who knows how to instruct you so that you are stimulated to instruct yourself; he who conveys to you outward blessings such as wealth or position in life in such a way that you are obliged to stamp your thought on them, and in order to that to be developed and educated—he is the greater benefactor. For it is not what we have given to us, but that which the gifts do in us and upon us, that measures their value and their power. Too easy an abundance in this world leads to self-indulgence, which is self-extinction substantially—for self-indulgence always degenerates and works down, and down.

The economy of mercy, the economy of society, and so of nature, the whole development of the divine moral government as manifested in the economy of God in spiritual things, seems to give nothing easily; to tax and task men for that which they are to receive; to make blessings shine and attract—but after all to hang them so high that no man shall have them that does not leap for them, that does not work for them, that does not exert himself for them. The things which men task themselves for, and which, after they are obtained, represent exertion, and the exertion of the highest part of our nature—these things rank highest and first.

So, then, the things which men value most, often are the least valuable things about them. The large estate which comes without a thought to the heir is an advantage, and is not likely to be refused; but, after all, the few thousands that have been painfully wrought out by enterprise, and industry, and patience, and faith, and integrity, are worth more to a man than millions on which he has never laid his hand, because they represent education in him. They not only stand for what they are themselves, but they have been a school. They have history. There is a training in them.

When, therefore, we ask mercies of God, we should remember that we are to ask in the line of his own providence and according to the constitution which he has established, both in the natural and in the spiritual world. When we ask that we may sit upon his right hand and upon his left, that we may be advanced in honor, in strength or in moral excellence, let us remember that we ask a gift which may require him to exercise us to the uttermost; to put us through the fire, through the flood, through the severe school of the soldier of campaigns, so that when the gift comes it will seem to us to have come from God.

Now, Christ meant to heal this woman's child all the time; but he dallied with her, he parleyed with her, as if she were a Gentile and not within his diocese; as if there were not enough mercy for both the Jews and the Gentiles. And so he aroused her and stimulated her desires until she became impetuous in her earnestness and faith; and then, the moment when her heart blossomed, he gave her her request. Thus, often, God in this world, in dealing with his children, weighs upon their strength and tasks their patience for a long time, and seems to answer their petitions with strokes, and their importunities with judgments, and their entreaties with pains; and yet in the end he hears their request, and blesses them.

So, remembering this providence and this dispensation, when we ask God for mercies, let us not forget that oftentimes if we take his blessings, we must take them from a fiery hand. The mercy which comes to us may be a mercy which comes with chastisements, that we may be waked up, and that afterwards we may be qualified to receive God's kind and loving ministration.

2. God's dealings with men are largely in this way, as they are revealed to us in providence. We have a distinct revelation of this fact in the twelfth of Hebrews, in that memorable passage in which the apostle says,

"Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening [if you understand

it, and enter into this school according to its nature and law], God dealeth with you as with sons." "We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us; and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of Spirits and live? For they verily for a few days chasten us after their pleasure [that is, according to their best judgment], but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

Now, all suffering in this world certainly does not tend to the production of spiritual fruit; and yet, there can be no question as to the doctrine of the New Testament, that, in the economy of providence, suffering should work and drive men from their lower plane toward a higher plane, step by step. There can be no question that divine providence is conducted upon this principle, and that the whole retinue of sorrows, and tears, and cares, and burdens, have a mission among men. In one way, it may be that they are from violations of natural law, and that in such a sense they are penalty; but in another way they are all of them working toward a higher education, driving us from a reliance upon our physical life, and making us rely more upon our social relations, and then augmenting our social relations, so that we shall take in the invisible and spiritual, as well as the temporal and visible, and teaching us that there is nothing on earth which can be a satisfaction to the soul that needs infinity, and so bringing us to take in the coming world, and developing us from the lowest state of physical things, up through the social and intellectual nature to the divine and heavenly nature, that we may become partakers of the nature of God. And when we look out upon the world, it is because we misunderstand its economy, that we say, "There is no evidence of divine providence; see how things are mixed together; see how sufferings fall upon all alike; see how there are no guiding principles; see how there is no government that arranges all things according to justice and equity." Yes, there is a government of that kind; but there is a department of that same government which is inflicting trial, and task, and suffering for the sake of higher moral development. And as the Saviour answered the mother when she plead for her child, after he had instructed her higher nature, and developed her spiritual fervor and intensity; so God is still doing. He is answering our prayers in providence, first by strokes and chastisements, and then by turning and saying, "These chastisements are not without a purpose. They are parental benedictions. They are education, to make you sons of God, and to bring you home finally to the heavenly state."

3. There is great power with God in spiritual intensity. Calmness has its place in the experience of the soul; and all the mild virtues have their place, and are full beautiful. It is not necessary that we should overrun them with reproach. It is not necessary that men of intense and fervent natures should undervalue quiet and mild natures;

nor is it necessary that quiet and mild natures should look with contempt upon intense and fervent natures; for both of them are a part of that great constitution of which we have each but little fragments. There can be no question that the philosophy of the New Testament is, that while the later ages of Christian development tend more and more toward peace and calmness in working out our salvation, there is in fervor, there is in intensity, great power—and not merely power of which we gain an analogy in physical things. I mean that God reveals himself as one that is accessible.

There are experiences, then, in every man's life, which are mutable, and which may be changed without any interference with the divine thought in the creation and management of things. God is not limited. He is not shut up in his own laws. He is not a prisoner in the world. He has power over what he has made, and he has the means of interpenetrating the constitution of things which he has established. He can, if he please, add ten thousand things which do not fall out in accordance with ordinary law. And he will do things in response to our importunity. He will do things for his children, on persuasion, provided they be things that are needful; provided the heart be prepared for them; and provided it has that faith which shows that the soul has risen into a condition to be benefited by the things done. And we are not left in doubt that there are mercies for God's people of which they have little conception, and which belong to the realm of intensity in spiritual desire.

Now, let us apply these thoughts.

In the first place, men have an impression that all that is necessary is, that they should watch against temptation, and strive against easily besetting sins, and be vigilant and laborious to overcome that which is wrong. There are few men who do battle against sin in the higher forms of spiritual intensity.

It is said that men are sinful, and will be to the end of life. It is said, in reference to certain constitutional sins, that we must expect that they will show themselves in those who are subject to them to the day of their death. That is all true in the lower sphere; but I believe there is a Holy Ghost that may be shed abroad in the hearts of men by which they may be so transformed that every evil, as it were, may be burnt out of them. It is in the power of education to put men to school in such a way that temptations and faults and sins of the most mighty kinds may be effectually destroyed. A man who, like Saul, is hard, and selfish, and proud, and hateful, and bigoted, and arrogant, and persecuting, may become sweet, and gentle, and magnanimous, and full of sympathy, like Paul. He that has lived for himself, and sacrificed others for himself, may be led to live for others, and to

sacrifice himself for them, dying deaths daily. There is a power by which men may overcome their easily besetting sins, and go into the very fastnesses of their own souls, and drive out all evil tendencies, and place there all the higher elements which God has provided for them, if they will rise to the intensity of the Syrophœnician woman. But it is not a mere wishing, it is not an ordinary solicitation, that will bring this about. It is when heart, and soul, and imagination, and the faith of hope and desire are concentrated, and the soul cries out, "Lord, help me!" that help comes, and is followed by the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

So, in the conflicts to which we are called with care and with trouble in this life, men are often overborne. Though they seek to bear up the best way they can, their trouble accumulates, and their strength seems to decrease. Many and many a one falls down discouraged, and says, "I cannot; I cannot; I am overtasked; I am overburdened." Yes, the natural man is. Men's trials are probably not less than they think them to be, although they may be relatively less, and it is hard for those who are in good health to stand and give consolation to those that are sick. It is hard for men who have great abundance to stand in that abundance and give good advice to those who are girded by all the troubles of poverty. Nevertheless, for that great army of sufferers through poverty, through disappointments, through cares, through troubles, through bereavement, through sicknesses, through conflicts, through all those trials which find their way into the household, and hover around the couch or over the cradle, there is relief. All these causes of suffering are vincible by the spirit of man. There is power in every one to rise up into the communion of God in such a way that there shall descend from the divine Spirit victorious intensity. But this comes only by prayer and fasting.

Thus, when we are laboring for those who are dear to us—for our children, for our pupils, for our friends; when we are seeking to bear them up to a higher level, or to recover them out of the slough; when the sky is overcast; when disappointment has put its cup to our lip; when for days, and months, and, it may be, years of weary waiting, we are almost disposed to give up, to lay down the conflict, there is power of relief even in the most desperate circumstances. There may be a faith, there may be importunity springing up from the soul of man. Christ may, for you, as he did for the Syrophœnician woman, cast the demon out, and say, "Thy faith hath saved thee."

How little do we agonize! How little do we lay ourselves out for those whom we seek to save with all the strength there is in us! How few have ever felt the energy of a soul-burning faith! How few have ever felt toward a fellow-creature, according to the measure

of man, that intensity of influence which God exerts from his great soul upon all those whom he would save! We know not what we can do, and what power there is in us, till we are raised by the Spirit of God to these higher conditions of intensity.

The work of the kingdom of God on earth needs this spiritual energy. We come to this work too often feeling that giving to it our alternative time is enough. We give to God what is left after supplying our lower wants. We give to God our weary hours. We give to God our unoccupied hours. When joy has taken what it needs, and social life has taken what it needs, and business has taken what it needs, then what is left—the barrenness of life, as it were—we give to moral influence and to the cause of God. How few there are who put their concentrated life into the work of God, and bring everything they have—body and soul—to bear on the promotion of God's work in this world! There are some such; and what a mighty power they have! How are they as flames in the world!

Mild and gentle working, although it does something, does it in a lower range; does it gradually; does it by slow accretions. The power which brings to pass rapid results; the power that carries up visibly the work of God; the power that promotes morality, that reclaims the intemperate, that inspires energy among the listless, and industry among those who are self-indulgent, that purifies the morals, that lifts the light of the other world upon this world, that brings men out of bondage and darkness into the light and liberty of the sons of God—this power comes from a much higher state of mind, if it be successful, than that which we give to our secular occupations. We know that men buckle themselves to their worldly work with a will, conscious that they will accomplish in proportion as they bring force to bear. But in spiritual life how easy you are! What a light pressure you exert to bring out the most wondrous results! My marvel, when I see people labor in this direction, is, not that there is so little done, but that there is so much done. By the blessing of God much is done; for God gives to the unworthy, and overpays our exertion. And if a hundred men should concentrate the strength of their being for short periods on any charity or cause of benevolence in this world, who can measure what an impetus that charity or cause might receive at their hands! There is no estimating what results may be achieved where spiritual intensity is made to be the condition of victory and of power.

Ah! it is not till we are brought to that point where we feel our need of God, that we know how to say "Lord, help me!" We say it often, and do not say it. We say it because it is the moisture, as it were, the dew, that is upon our night of storm. We say it because

habit has taught us to say it. How few there are, all of whose nature in them joins together and sends forth that victorious sentence, "Lord, help me!" When we do this, then God comes. Then, when we have learned the secret of that sentence, the heavens open. Then the denied gifts are granted. Then the Spirit, before withheld, comes forth, and our joy and peace flow like a river.

Christian brethren, is not this the very sentence which we should write upon the door of the new year—"Lord help me?" Is not this the very petition which we should lay upon our heart, and upon our conscience, and upon all the soul—"Lord, help me"? Is not this that which every parent should see, going into the portals of his dwelling to-day, inscribed there by him—"Lord, help me"? Is not this the very prayer which should overlay our business for the year—"Lord, help me"? Is not this that which, if we stand looking down into the darkness of sickness and trouble, should be to us as Mount Zion—"Lord, help me"? Is not the very word which they who begin a Christian life openly and avowedly to-day, and are to walk through all the phases of Christian experience down to the day of their death, should write upon their shield—"Lord, help me"? And when we rise, by and by, with the great multitude that have washed their raiment in blood, and made it white, then we shall stand in the presence of God, and change the phrase in triumph, saying, "*The Lord hath helped me.*"

And now, Christian brethren, we will, after the blessing is pronounced, draw near to the symbols which represent to our faith that helpful and loving Saviour; and I invite to join with us all those who feel themselves to be sinful, who feel that they need divine help and care, and who are willing to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and his service as their life. I invite them, without reference to any doctrinal distinction or church connection, on this simple and personal ground, that they realize their sinfulness, and feel their need of help, and are willing to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their helper and Saviour. For this is the table of the Lord, and not of this church.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

O thou that hast risen from the dead, and art gone up on high, Jesus, our Saviour, thou that art equal to God! thou hast made him known to us—in thee we have found life, and love, and faith, and hope, and pardon; and in thee we desire, from day to day to live, not having on our own righteousness, but that which is of faith by thee. We bless thee for the experience of days gone by. We thank thee for all the knowledge of truth which has been

*Immediately following the reception of members into the Church.

made known to us; for all the hope that has sprung therefrom. We thank thee for that which thou hast promised, and which thou art fulfilling to thy people. We rejoice that thou art with them yet; and that thou art making prayer indeed a power with God; and that parents are receiving their children that were dead spiritually, to life again; and that they that were in their graves are coming forth; and that thou art bringing life and light and glory into many and many a heart. We thank thee for all those that are called, and for all that hear the voice of God calling to them, and who are brought out of darkness into light, and out of winter into summer, and out of every worldliness into joy and heavenly-mindedness.

We thank thee that so many this morning have taken upon themselves the name of the gracious Saviour. May they have his Spirit dwelling perpetually in them. May they have, as an immutable possession, the treasures of hope and faith and love. And we pray, O Lord our God! that in all their trials and temptations and crosses, they may find thee ever present, and thy promises, which are Yea and Amen, abundantly fulfilled to them all, in sickness and in health; in labors in over measure; in heart-sickness from hope deferred. Grant that they may still find that near to thee, everywhere, is grace in which is might and succor for every human need. And we pray that they may never be discouraged. Even though they stumble and fall, may they rise again. Though they wander, may the Shepherd find them, and bring them back to the fold. And we pray, O Lord our God, that they may rejoice in this day, and in this hour.

Bless, we pray thee, this Church, into which they have been taken. May it grow strong not only by numbers, but by courage. May its members be as lights shining into the darkness around about them, that men, seeing their good works, may glorify their Father which is in heaven.

We pray that thou wilt bless all our households. Bless all our children. Bless those that are with us, and those that are scattered far away. On this morning we look abroad and search out over the earth for those that are near and dear to us, and bring them in the arms of our faith, and lay them before thee, and beseech of thee that thy blessing may rest upon them.

We pray that thou wilt be with the sick. Be with all that are broken-hearted. Be with all that sit in the region of the shadow of death. Draw near to the sons of want and distress.

And thou that art the God of the whole earth, we beseech of thee that thou wilt begin thy work of benevolence, and of mercy, and of peace, and of goodness, and love, upon this opening of the year. May all the days of this year, as they successively run out, be days of God's blessing and goodness. May they prepare us for life or death; and may we, not being anxious, cast our burdens on the Lord. May we be sustained by the divine promises. May we be upheld by the faith and hope of the Gospel of Christ. And as our days, so may our strength be, also.

And so we pray that thou wilt grant unto us, from year to year, to walk leaning upon thee more and more, and to trust in thy promises, until our time of departure comes. Then may we find our home, and our heaven, and our God, and at last ourselves.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

MAN'S WILL AND GOD'S LOVE.

"For without me you can do nothing.—John. xv. 5.

This is only saying again to the disciples, concerning their relation to their Lord and Master, what had been said throughout the economy of revelation in respect to man and his relations to God. It was the annunciation of that dependence which is a part of the divine idea of creation, and one of the sweetest and most delightful of all the facts which we can contemplate in that relation which subsists between us and our God. And yet, there is no other truth that has been more abused. No other truth, capable of carrying so much consolation, has carried so little—at any rate to some minds, and under certain circumstances—as this, of the absolute dependence of man upon God.

There have been two capital mistakes generally made in the interpretation of Scripture language; the first, giving to the language of the affections and of the domestic relations the sense of political and governmental terms; taking words out of their place and relationship as words of the heart, and making them words interpreted by the analogies of civil polity—which is very different. And for reasons that I will show, this has been much done in the interpretation of the Bible, and with very great mischief. The second trouble has arisen in interpretation by giving a rigidly philosophical meaning to terms which belong to the imagination and to the emotions. In this way, at one time and another, the most extraordinary propositions have been deduced, and systems built. But far worse, the most attractive and nourishing of all truths have been rendered unattractive, and sometimes even repulsive, by such a presentation as obscures the whole spirit and temper of them.

We will take, as an eminent illustration, this truth of *man's dependence upon God*, which, as it was preached into the ear of the disciples of Christ, was full of cheer and of comfort. It was the word of love. It touched the spirit of love and confidence. It tended to excite, in the instances which we have quoted, gladness and gratitude. It

SUNDAY MORNING, Jan. 8, 1871. LESSON: 1 PET. I. 3-25. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 255, 1241, 1259.

made men strong in that day. It helped them to lean against the power of the Almighty. And yet, so has man's dependence upon God often been preached since that day that it has made men weak, helpless, and sometimes even skeptical.

It is the universal impression (although the religiousness of it escapes many), it is the sentiment of humanity, that in this sphere man is weak—weak in judgment, and in executive force, and in comprehension, and in fore-sightedness; and that when he has done his best, he still needs a providence. And he has a providence. For when men are brought to exigencies, they frequently betray a latent belief in the overruling providence and presence of God, and their dependence upon it, which they at other times for speculative reasons deny. Everyone has exigencies of life when he ardently longs to lean back upon the divine presence and the divine power. The excitement of a man's faculties for ordinary purposes, and for ordinary occasions, may be a sufficient guidance and a sufficient light; but whenever he comes to new and perilous paths, and whenever great interests are at stake, it is utterly inadequate.

In such exigencies, they that are the least accustomed to confess the divine providence and presence are utterly changed in this respect. In the presence of death, in the presence of great disaster, in the presence of quaking fears, they turn away from conscious weakness, and from the weakness of men, and from all human counselors, and feel that they need the wisdom and the overruling power of that God who is the father of us all. So that taking the race throughout, there is no sentiment that breaks out and betrays itself more frequently in periods of necessity than this, that man does need to look up to God and to depend upon him.

The thing itself, too, is majestically beautiful. There is nothing on earth more beautiful than the sight of a father in the midst of his helpless children in the household using his experience, and skill, and life, and power, to guard them; to stimulate them; to teach them how to help themselves; to lead them up to strength and to a right manhood.

But this is the analogy. Our dependence upon God includes in it all that the parental relation on earth does, and much more. It adds two elements which make it richer and more beautiful. It is the sovereignty of a Father that is essentially taught throughout the Bible, Old Testament and New. It is the supremacy of love, the wisdom of love, the purity of love, the requisitions of love, the government of love—and not less because it implies pain as well as pleasure.

The universality of this divine overruling thought and care, and its continuity through ages, adds grandeur to its beauty. There cannot be two pictures conceived more magnificent than that of love

militant through all time, and that of love triumphant through all eternity.

Now, that men should rejoice that there is an intelligent government above them, that they may lean upon it, that they may renew their strength in this inexhaustible strength of God, that they may quicken their own inspirations, and have something which mere natural law does not give them; that men should find satisfaction in the truth that some things are lent to them from God's originating power—that men should learn to derive great consolation from the contemplation of this fact, is not strange. It would seem almost inevitable. And where this truth is left to its simple spiritual interpretation, this is the result, and it gives comfort and strength.

But, on the other hand, this doctrine of God's relation to man has been so stated, and still is so taught (though not so generally as hitherto) that hardly any other truth has seemed so disagreeable to many persons as that of the absolute dependence of man upon God. It has been repulsive. Men have repelled and contested it.

It may serve to clear up the doctrine itself, and to bring it into its true light and beauty and power, if we attempt to show what are some of the reasons why this simple truth has in many ages been generally offensive, and why in the minds of many persons it still continues to be so.

1. The doctrine of man's dependence upon God has been so presented as to conflict with men's observations, and with their own personal consciousness. For, to state that we are absolutely dependent upon God, with the qualifications which frequently have attached to this statement, seems to men a destruction of their freedom; a destruction of the liberty of their will; a destruction of all power of rational conduct. If they can be really nothing of themselves; if they are not separate organizations, with the power of thought, and with the power of will, acting, to be sure, within certain narrow limits, but acting independently within those limits, then in what sense are they free, more than particles of matter, which are propelled by other particles of matter? Any such dependence of man upon God as makes God's will the absolute and only cause of every thought and every feeling in man, cannot be so explained but that men will say, "Then we are nothing. God is the only thinker; the only doer; the only operative force. If it is all God, in what respect can it be man?"

Of nothing, on the whole, are men more tenacious than of their own freedom. They believe that freedom belongs to them, within given limited spheres. And they glory in it, and are jealous of it. It is the mainspring of government, and of whatever pertains to the intercourse of man with man. And to affirm any such doctrine of depend-

ence as takes away from man his conscious and plenary liberty, is to offend his moral consciousness, and to contradict all his experience and observation of men. So to put God's supremacy as to make that all, is to destroy man's individuality, and is an unmixed evil.

To teach, on the other hand, that God's supremacy and power, and man's dependence upon it, are like the dependence of the child upon the parent, and the parent's supremacy and power; to teach, in other words, that God is the fountain and perennial cause of man's individuality and separateness, and of the freedom of his understanding, of his choice, and of his action; to teach that man is dependent upon God for liberty and personality, is not offensive to the moral sense, nor to the judgment. On the contrary, it is to teach us that our free agency is guaranteed by the very course of creation, and that God maintains in mankind that estate of liberty which he instituted, and instituted for the wisest purposes—government in civil society, and in the great moral realm of the universe.

He, then, who so preaches man's dependence upon God as to destroy the independence of man, and deny his capability of doing anything of himself, mistakes the doctrine, and instead of making it an instrument of power, makes it a stumbling-block and an offense.

2. Man's dependence upon God has been so taught—and *mis*taught—as to conflict with the sense of justice in men. That man can do nothing without God has been taught; and in a large way of using that phrase there is a truth in it. The globe itself would not exist if it were not for the continued operation of the divine will. Every man on the globe is dependent for liberty of life upon the divine will. And all those second causes which are operating to produce vitality and reason and choice, go back to that sovereign will, which holds them in existence. And so, in that large sense, we are remotely dependent upon God for the existence of all those instrumentalities by which we are free. But to teach our dependence upon God so directly as to make it appear that we cannot employ our reason nor our will as separable from God's, and yet, that we are condemnable for not doing what no power was given to men to do, or for what we do by a power supereminent over ours—this confounds every notion of justice and of equity which God has implanted in man.

No governor, be he named from names above or from names beneath, and no ruler, be he omniscient and omnipotent, or be he finite, has the right to require of a man more than he gives him the personal power to perform. And the power must be inherent in the individual. If a man is so dependent upon God for power that he can do nothing of himself, then he is responsible for nothing. If he is in such a sense dependent upon God that it is the divine impulsion that puts him on

to what he does, then there can be no responsibility on his part for what he does. If a man is not independent in the use of his faculties, if he is not capable of originating his own choices and acting according to his own personal will, then he is not in a condition to assume the responsibility of his conduct.

Though this mistaught doctrine may have in its statement a subtle line of truth, its general effect is to bring men into collision with the fundamental conceptions of moral government. And yet, there have been times when men have been tied by this teaching of dependence. They have been taught that they could neither think nor act nor do anything except by the divine inspiration; and that that divine inspiration was itself dependent upon God's own private will and counsel; and that that will and counsel men could not change. They have been taught that God did what pleased him; and that no man could turn him or modify him; and yet they have been taught that men were responsible both for the things which they did do, and for the things which they did not do.

This is simply a net of abominations. It violates every fundamental instinct and every form of teaching and doctrine, I will not say of our own households, but of Scripture itself.

3. This doctrine of man's dependence upon God has been so taught, frequently, as to seem to erect an Oriental despotism. It has been so taught as to lift up a tyrannical Deity, and not a Father, into sovereignty. It has been boldly taught that God had a right to make men in any way; and that having made them, he had a right to impose upon them any conditions which he chose, and that he had a right to do this without any other consideration than his own private thought and will. It has been taught that neither was man consulted, nor was there any foresight taken of what his condition would be; that the whole originating and creating thought of God was infinite and separate, and that it was absolutely sovereign, He taking counsel of none.

There may be an element of truth in this, as an element of necessity; but the impression produced by such teaching is, that God is to the last degree despotic, unsympathetic, arbitrary, and, finally, unjust. For, virtually it is a teaching which recognizes the right of absolute power to be cruel or despotic. You cannot so interpret this doctrine, if you represent it in that way, but that it will convey the idea that God is God simply because he is wiser than all others, and because he is stronger than all others; and that because he happens to have priority of place and position, he has a right to make just what he pleases, and govern it just as he pleases.

If this notion is the correct one in respect to God, why may not all other beings in the lower spheres assume just the same authority for themselves as far as their power goes?

If might makes right in heaven, why does not might make right in Prussia, in Arabia, in Jerusalem, in Athens, in Rome, anywhere? It is destructive of the very foundation-element of morality, and it confounds all ideas of justice and equity and mercy. For, if there be one thing that is more Christian than another, if there be one truth that grew all the way through the Bible, taking larger and larger proportions, and clearer and clearer developments, it is the infinite *obligation* of greatness and of wisdom and of goodness to things inferior to them. What is the law that Christ himself taught, but this, that The greatest shall serve the least? They that were the "servants of all," were the chief men among the disciples. Christ announced this doctrine, not simply as obligatory upon men, but also as defining his own character. When he girded himself with a towel, and washed the disciples' feet, he said to them, "Your Lord and Master hath done this to teach you that ye ought always to serve one another." In other words, he brought down the doctrine of the divine existence, the law that God himself acts under, and made it the law of the human sphere. That is to say, he brought out the truth, and not the Oriental, despotic doctrine that because God was the best thinker, and was high up above anybody's reach, and had infinite power, and had out-stretching arms of authority, and was sovereign, therefore he had a right to do what he pleased, and to say, "Who art thou? I follow the counsels of my own will; and no man shall gainsay my right to do it." Not that, but this, was the Christian doctrine as announced from the lips of Christ himself: "I, your Lord and Master, being the greatest of all, have set you the example of obligation to do the lowest services possible, even unto the least worthy."

Greatness is beholden to littleness. Goodness owes allegiance of love to ungoodness. Power is the natural protector of weakness. Elevation takes care of inferiority, from the very topmost heaven. That is the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

And yet, tempted of the devil, men have undertaken so to teach our dependence upon God as to reverse this whole view, and to convey the idea that we are dependent upon God because he is the omnivorous praise-gatherer of the universe. They have made him out to be a God who, having all power, and being unlimited in wisdom, as well as in might, lifted himself high above men, and administered the affairs of the universe without foresight of virtue or vice, and without reference to obedience or disobedience. And the result of this teaching has been to leave, and it always has left, on the popular mind, the impression that there inhered in God, by reason of his omnipotence and omniscience, a right which we deny to earthly monarchs, to earthly parents, to everybody on earth—the right to act from selfish motives,

instead of acting from a consideration sympathetic, sweet, generous, just, magnanimous, glorious, of the wants and wishes of the whole sentient and suffering universe of his creatures.

Any view, then, of our dependence upon God, which is so put as to make men feel that because God is supreme in heaven he has a right to do what he pleases, is violative, not only of the intuitions of manhood, but also of the revelations of truth in the Word of God. And nowhere more than in the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ is God revealed in the plenitude of parental love. Not that it was there first revealed; for the Old Testament had said substantially the same things.

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."

The Old Testament is full, I had almost said, of cradle songs of consolation and of pleasure. There were times when God assumed an almost fierce vindication of his sovereign, magisterial and kingly attributes; but there were other times in which he interpreted them, as it were. He assumed them for paternal purposes. And the heart of God, as represented in the Old Testament, or the New, is a heart of love. And his consideration of man has never been set forth as a consideration simply for the sake of his own private self, of his own pleasure, of his own enjoyment.

I said that the ordinary mode—or rather the extraordinary mode—which has prevailed at certain times of teaching man's dependence upon God, subverts the fundamental ideas of morality. It does. You never will clear the world of tyrants as long as you worship a tyrant on the throne of the universe. You never can put down ecclesiastical oppression, you never can put down oligarchies, you never can put down the despotism of man over man, whether by classes or individuals, so long as men are taught that mere strength in God gives him the right to govern men. He has the right to govern men; but it is because he is better, because he is sweeter, because he is wiser than any other creature in the universe. It is because he is so absolutely unselfish. When you go back and look into the divine nature, does it seem to you that God has a right to make men as he will? Yes, he has that right, if his will is always to make them benevolently—and it is. He has the right inhering in benevolence. And has he not a right to govern them as he will? Yes, if his will is always to govern them benevolently—and it is. He has that right, too, inhering in benevolence. There are nowhere such obligations of generosity and kindness and mercy as those which God takes upon himself. Because he is God, he is under obligation to everything that he has brought into creation to be just, to be true, and to be full of love toward it.

Now, dependence upon such a God as that, whose will is love, whose purpose is love, whose life is love, and whose aims through ages and cycles of ages are final rectitude and elevation and grandeur of being, can never be repulsive—can never be other than attractive to any free, rational, right-minded man.

4. This leads me one step further; namely, to state that the doctrine of dependence upon God has offended the moral consciousness of men because it is implied that God's government over the world is monarchical, and not personal and paternal. And here I am met with a view which is a perplexing one; namely, that we derived this notion of God as a monarch, and king, and ruler, and governor, from the express language of Scripture itself. That is, "The Bible," men say, "ascribes to God these characters; and if it be true, they must belong to him." I do not deny that this is the fact; but I affirm that the modern idea of sovereignty is unscriptural. Men have taken these terms and applied them to God after history has emptied them of one meaning, and filled them with another and different one. They cling to the words, and use them in the same way that they were used in the far off historical period, though they convey an essentially different idea to those who hear them now from that which they conveyed to those who heard them then. For monarchs originally grew out of the paternal relation. First was the family; and it is a historical fact that the father was simply the head of the household. And as his children grew up and married, he still continued the head of the little group of families that they formed, and so became a patriarch. And still, as the circle widened, he sustained to the cluster of families about him the same relation which he sustained to his own household; namely, the personal and parental relations, although he was chief and ruler. That is the mode of government among the Sheiks and the tribes of Asia, and of most of the nomadic nations of to-day. It is a personal, though a kingly government. This was the historic origin of the title of king, and for a long time it conveyed to men the highest conception of fatherhood. And so the man that was at the head of a community or a tribe was the chief. He was the father. And it was during that period when the world was still under the influence of the idea that a king was the highest type of the paternal relation, that the monarchic terms of the Bible came into vogue.

They came into vogue when to be a king was not only to be a father, but to be a most resplendent development of fatherhood, and when they conveyed to those who first received them, not the idea which *king* conveys to us in modern days, nor the idea which that word conveyed to those who lived in mediæval times, but the ancient notion of a glorified father, of an ennobled father, of an enriched father,

transcendently wise and good and merciful father. I do not doubt that in all the early periods of revelation, when God was set forth as a mighty King, the word *king* was invested with all the elements with which the beloved father of a household is now invested. It did not convey the idea of a dynastic, impersonal being.

But for three thousand years, monarchy has been a thing wholly different from fatherhood. I know that monarchs yet say that they are the fathers of their people; but it is all a pretence. They are fathers of their people in the same way that those men are fishermen who are called fishermen at Rome, but who certainly bear as little resemblance to the fishermen of Galilee as can be conceived of, in ecclesiastical ichthyology. For the last three thousand years monarchy has been odious. It has lived away from its origin. It has, by circumstances, been transmuted into a thing very different from what it was in early times, not only, but the associations connected with it have entirely changed. So that when a man has been spoken of as a monarch, it has long ceased to convey to the minds of the hearers the same conception which it did in ancient times.

A monarch in early days bore personal relations to the people under his government; but in later periods a monarch is a mere abstraction. Not one in ten thousand ever sees him. When kings were first made and spoken of there was not a member of a tribe that did not see his king once or twice every day, perhaps. Then a king was the chief in a small community, and was perpetually held in reverence by his subjects, as a father is by his children. And as far down as the time of Solomon the king was among his people, and was looked up to by men as their highest representative; as the noblest personage among them; as a father in their midst.

A parental government is one in which the parent is present in sympathetic relations. A monarchical government is one in which the monarch is not present except in imagination, or through agents. A parental government is the government of one who acts directly on the minds of those under his sway. A monarchical government is a government in which the monarch acts indirectly through his decrees, or by means of a system of laws and institutions. Therefore, although kingship grew out of fatherhood, it outgrew it, and left far behind the divine original conception of a king. So that now a king is a mere abstract personage, set up to represent certain authorities in the state. The Governor of New York is seen by very few of the people of New York. He is nothing to them personally. He is so far divested of the element of personality that it is his boast and pride to say, "I do not allow myself to act for the public good with any consideration of my own feelings." To be a king now, means to be—if a tyrant, one

who says, "I act my own will because it is my own will, and my agents perform my bidding for my benefit"; or if a tolerable monarch, it is to be so abstract as to be able to say, "I never take counsel of my own judgment. I ask law what I shall do; I ask institutions what I shall do; I ask customs what I shall do; I ask precedents what I shall do." But the original conception of a king was that of a father who did not ask laws, nor institutions, nor customs, nor precedents, but his own best judgment, controlled by love, what he should do; and he acted according to the dictates of his heart toward his subjects, as a father does toward his children, for their welfare.

In this insidious way, by this philosophical gradation from period to period, there came this change over the governments of the world. The fatherhood of the old king was splendid; but that has passed away, and nothing is left but a selfish tyrant, or the abstraction of a monarch. And now to say that God is a monarch, is to take him out of personal relations to men, and to make his system a system of laws and institutions, and not of sympathetic influences. We never shall go back to the spirit of Christ, and we never shall go back to the spirit of the old Hebrew revelation, until we shall have formed such a conception of the divine government as to make God personal, and to make his laws simply the revelation of his thoughts, his feelings, and his individual will. The arbitrary monarchical notions which exist to-day stand right in the way of a correct understanding of the parental government of God. Instead of helping, they hinder.

Mankind have been growing away from monarchy toward a nobler conception of government. They grew into monarchy from the patriarchal state, which had much in it that was beautiful and glorious. It was perverted little by little. And what they have suffered has driven them away from monarchy, till now nothing is so little likely to excite a response in the bosoms of the multitudes of this world as to call God, King. For kings to-day are at a discount. Here and there remains the uncurbed, unrestrained sovereignty of a king; but in the most civilized nations kings are held in by the authority of the people, and are permitted to be kings only just so far as folks choose to have them. Once they stood from head to foot every inch kings; but little by little they found themselves, first knee-deep, and then thigh-deep, and then shoulder-deep in laws, until now there is only just a face visible, with a crown on it; and all around are the laws of the people. It is so in England, to-day. The king or queen of England is nothing. The great people are everything. And, after all, the monarchy which we saw in France was but a sham—a mere pasteboard thing held together by physical force, and not by moral force, nor even by commercial cohesion. And in Italy to-day, Emanuel could

not reign an hour except by the consent of his people. And Austria has lost her power to be an empire, because the kingly element has so far died out of her people that she is obliged to fall back on the people, or the popular element. There is growing up against royalty the power of the household, and the power of the communities which are made up of households; and kings, despite the separateness which ages of power and privilege had given them, are being brought down nearer and nearer to the great common people. They are in these days being brought down from the despotism of abstract laws and institutions, into a nearer sympathy with the mass of men and women of society. Things are working back again, after the long mediæval captivity.

But the meaning of the word *King* has grown into unpopularity through centuries of abuse of the kingly function. Now, under such circumstances, to preach that conception of the character of God, and of the temper of God, which prevailed in mediæval times; to preach God as an absolute sovereign, and as having rights quite independent of the rights of his subjects—what a perversion of the truth it is! Neither the Old Testament nor the New has anything in it to that effect. The same terms have been employed to represent the idea of fatherly kingship as it existed in ancient times, and of monarchy as it has existed in the middle and later periods of the world, and those terms used to describe God's relations to men: thus has arisen a wrong conception, because those terms at first conveyed different meanings from those which they have conveyed since.

5. Our God must embody the highest elements of character which have been wrought out in human experience, or else it will be found quite in vain for us to attempt to make an exposition of the divine nature which will have power among men. We are to recollect that Christianity itself is an influence that is educating men not only to be better, but from their own goodness to conceive of a higher type of character. The consequence is that from age to age the expositions of the divine character are larger and nobler. And thus religion is doing its appropriate work.

It is impossible that God should be revealed in entirety. Therefore we come to the knowledge of God little by little; and that, not by the mere power of thinking, but by the power of being. We need to have better households; nobler and truer fathers; larger and richer mothers. We need more of that which enters into the highest character. It is needful that the finer and more admirable traits should come out in men, and that we should see them and become familiar with them in parents and friends and neighbors. And the moment this takes place, we begin to feel the need of just such elements as these in our God. Then there comes up in our reasonings about God

the requisition of a Deity that shall represent all those higher, sweeter and more beautiful elements which we have seen unfolded in the household, and in the best men in the community; namely, patience, self-denial, long-suffering, kindness, love—all that goes to constitute and fill out our highest ideal. Thus, all those things which we have derived from the inspiration of God go back and interpret God to our thought. Our conception of the divine character ought to grow larger, our definition of attribute and authority ought to grow nobler, in every cycle of ages in the world. As mankind go up, their ideas of God should go up. And if men have fixed their notion of God so firmly that they cannot change it; if they have just such a philosophical formula which they attempt to keep from age to age, the world is robbed of the comfort and benefit of its own capacity to understand God better. It is this that makes the doctrine of the dependence of man upon God so oppressive that men often revolt at it and refuse to accept it. They have had a growing conviction of what God is, and what he must be. There are many things about him of which they have no clear idea, but of what his great attributes are they feel that they have abundant indications. There are thousands of you who hear sermons about God which you do not believe, and will not to the end. You go home after listening to an exposition of the divine nature, and say, "That may be so; he seemed to prove it; but———." What does that shake of the head mean, but this: "Although it seems to be so, yet I do not believe it." Views are pressed upon men through whole periods of years, which their moral sentiments, their affections and their tastes reject and repudiate. Motives of government are urged upon men which the common people can not at all make up their minds to accept. I can tell you why they will not accept them. Because the representations of the divine character and of the divine government which are presented to the community are presented to men whose minds have been lifted nigher than those representations, by the inspiration of God's providence, which is teaching us truer and nobler conceptions of manhood—and of manhood all the way up. And we measure God by these human ideas—the only standards by which we can measure him—the only means of interpretation which we have. Now, unless theologians keep pace with the growth of actual manhood in the ages of the world, unless they keep pace with the best inspirations of the best men, they resist and hinder the great moral doctrines of the universe, and they present an erroneous conception of the attributes of the great moral Governor of the globe; and men little by little fall away from those conceptions. For men will follow their highest instincts of that which is pure, and true, and sweet, and lovely, and divine.

It is on this point which I have attempted to analyze and portray,

that I differ from my venerated father, and that I have differed from my brethren in the ministry. I have tried to understand these conceptions of duty and love and fidelity which I saw plainly in life around about me, which I have gathered up and brought to bear as a kind of medium and lens by which I have interpreted the same things in God.

There is a higher moral government of God than that which has been taught us. The arguments and analogues which have been drawn from civil government, and by which God is restrained in the teachings of generations gone by, are borrowed, not from the strongest but the weakest side of human development. The arguments and analogues which men have been afraid to draw from the household, I have drawn from the household. And I have said, and I affirm again, and would say if it were my last message, that we are to interpret the nature of God, not from monarchy, and not from the necessities of civil government. Whether God is personal, and his government paternal, must be determined from the personal relations of a father to his own children. And as God is infinite, so he must be better than any earthly fathers—better in the direction of love, and long-suffering, and patience, and goodness, and self-sacrifice. And here it is that comes in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ to you, and to me, and to the whole world.

"And God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to die for it."

Away with your reprobate schemes, away with your infernal necromancy of old theologies, to teach me that God sits on the throne of the universe and creates men on purpose to damn them, and does it without any foresight of their conduct, and for his own pleasure! I protest against the blasphemy and the infamy of such a representation of God. And, on the other hand, I bring you this teaching of the New Testament, that the highest and the mightiest state of greatness means serving the lowest and the least. God said, "This is the evidence of my love, that I have given my own Son to die rather than that mankind should die."

I take that sentiment, that highest fact respecting the character and government of God—the central fact of his self-sacrificing love; and I say, Whatever you cannot get into that, leave out; and whatever you can put into that, put it in, and keep it there. If you attempt to frame God's character from monarchy,—from the rude experiments of civil government in this world,—you will have a God that is hard-featured, hard-handed, selfish, despotic; but if you take God as the Father of the world, and frame a belief of God from the noblest type of the parental relation, and put into it all the sweet affinities that be-

long to the household, you cannot go far wrong. And the more you study it, the more you will find that it brings you into sympathy and agreement with the average representations of the New Testament.

So presented, it seems to me that no person would ever seek to avoid this great Scripture truth, "Without me ye can do nothing," but that all men will fall into the belief of it as children fall into the love of home. The child that is brought up well at home, has no brighter conception of life and joy, than, when Christmas sets him free, and Thanksgiving comes round, and holidays intervene between the periods of business, to go back again to the parental roof, if the venerated father and mother still live, who brought him up to honor and usefulness, through love and fidelity and kindness. When a man is strong, there is nothing that he likes to do so much as to bow down to those that taught him to be strong. The stronger a man is, the more he wants to have some one that is stronger than he is to lean upon. There is a pleasure in being independent; but there is also a pleasure in being dependent. There is in this life a love of freedom, and satisfaction in a self-poised will; but this life also has the reclining instinct, the bowing-down instinct, the love of looking up to one who is higher and better. The child likes to look up to his father, because the father is larger and stronger and wiser than the child. And when Christ taught this doctrine, he taught one of the most familiar of our experiences, and one that all recognize—the being dependent upon and leaning on those who are superior. That truth is the same whether it be applied to our relations with our fellow men or to our relations with God. And all our life long we have, as Christians, and as members of Christian households, been blessed with every development of thought, with every fundamental element of faith, and with every relation of affectionate trust, and affectionate submission, and affectionate dependence. This has been the providential education which God has brought out in the household. And when Christ turned to his disciples, and said, "Without me ye can do nothing," it was not to remind them of their poverty: it was to teach them gratitude. When Love says to Love, "You are nothing without me," Love feels enriched. And when God says that we are dependent upon him, it is not for the sake of shaking his crown in our faces; it is not for the sake of making his power flame before our eyes; it is not equivalent to his saying, "How weak you are down there! and how strong I am up here!" It is as the bending of the mother over the cradle, and soothing the fears of the little child. It is as the benediction of the old man who bids his children hope in dark and trying days. It is the assurance of protection. It is the conferring of a parental blessing. It is a declaration of love on the part of God.

We are weak; we are needy; we all need disinterested friends. And there is no such Friend as God—none that is so near to us, none that thinks of us so much, none that looks upon us as so dear. Your father does not love you as God does, and your mother does not. The very center of the universe burns and glows with the summer of love. And all the intimations of our affiliations with God and our dependence upon him, are but so many sweet voices speaking to us with words of love, of benediction and of immortality.

God grant that in our constant needs we may rely, not even upon our own earnest efforts, but upon Him who is our health, our strength, our life, and who puts his arm about us, and says, in the moment of every strait or emergency, "Without me ye can do nothing." And may our souls rejoice, and say, "I can do all things, Christ strengthening me."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

Thou holy and eternal God! we rejoice that we may look forth without trembling, though we reverence. For thou art our Father, and art a thousand times more full of graciousness and tenderness toward us than we, with our limited instincts, are toward our children. Thy wisdom comprehends all our being. Thy power surrounds the utmost limit of thought, and transcends conception. Thy wisdom is entire and infinite, and thy goodness is the reason of the goodness that is throughout creation. For every heart has been kindled at thine. Every pulsation of gladness is of thee, and learned of thee how to be. And thou art in all things, filling all, teaching all, inspiring all, and rejoicing in all thy work.

And now grant that we may be lifted up above the level of ordinary apprehensions, and that we may learn to love those that are dependent upon us, even as we are loved of God. Help us to give more and more dignity and wisdom and power to our affections, and to distil them upon our children: not as upon idols, but with the thought of their immortality. May it be granted unto us so to live as to strengthen all love, and to build up in a godly and holy faith a commonwealth of life, and a preparation for immortality.

Be with thy servants that have presented their children, and have with faith offered them up, that they may from infancy be consecrated to the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray that these children may be spared, and that they may grow up to lives of usefulness and wisdom and honor. And may the parents be actuated to say the right things, and to do the right things. And may they find the blessing of God going with them and surrounding them in their households, so that it shall not be a vain thing that they have offered themselves and their offspring in covenant unto God.

We pray that thou wilt remember the parents who have aforetime, by discipline and instruction, and in the spirit of love, sought to win their children from all that is earthly and evil, and to inspire in them all that is right and noble. Accept their desires and their efforts.

* Immediately following the baptism of children.

And we pray for the young in our midst. Wilt thou grant that they may grow up in integrity, and in truth, and in honor, and in fidelity, and that they may be prepared well to perform their part in the life that now is, and to inherit the greater gladness of that life which is to come.

We pray that thou wilt bless all the labors of those that seek to inspire the young with truth. Bless our Sabbath-schools and Bible-classes. And be with all those who go forth among the neglected, to teach them. May they be sanctified with the spirit of their master, and with all patience and gentleness and fidelity may they seek to make up the lack of those that are outcast and needy.

We pray that thou wilt bless the labors of this church, in every direction. More and more fill it with thy Spirit and with thy praise. More and more may its power be a power as of God, and direct men as with a shining light into the right path, and away from things harmful and things dangerous.

We pray that thou wilt bless thy churches everywhere. Multiply the number of those who shall be able to make known the excellence of God to men. Build up Zion on every hand. May her waste places come up in remembrance before thee. Be with all those who in feebleness and sickness and opposition, and half-discouraged, labor and strive in word and doctrine; and by the Spirit give them courage and victory.

We pray that those who have gone abroad to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ's Gospel among the dark and outlying nations of the earth, may be prospered. Though the seed which they sow seem long to lie unfruitful, at length bring in Jew and Gentile, and fill the whole earth with thy glory.

O Lord! how long shall it be that the kingdom of darkness shall contest the kingdom of light? How long shall cruelty lift its hand against mercy? How long shall men rage against their fellow men as brute beasts of the forests rage against each other? When wilt thou come to make known thy power and thy love? When wilt thou bring peace and knowledge and purity? When shall the earth see thy salvation? Thou hast promised it; and we believe that in thine own good time thou wilt bring it to pass. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to go with the words which have been spoken. Draw near to our understanding and our imagination. Draw near with might, and interpret thy power and truth and wisdom to us. Lift upon us the light of thy countenance. Give us the joy of thy salvation. By the Holy Ghost may we be lifted above all trial and trouble, and be made strong in the life which now is, and be prepared for the life which is to come. And at last wilt thou crown us with welcome and greet us with joy.

And we will give the praise of our salvation to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

MAKING OTHERS HAPPY.

"Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself."—Rom. xv., 2, 3.

A man's soul is like a garden belonging to an old neglected mansion. It is full of excellent things run to waste. There are vines unpruned, and fruit trees covered with moss and canker; thickets of roses, and thickets of thorns; tangles of vines and of nettles; rank and noisome weeds, as well as fair flowers.

Now, it is the business of a garden to be wholesome, and sweet, and beautiful. It has no right to have weeds in it, nor to have its beautiful things dilapidated. It is made on purpose to confer pleasure and profit.

Thus it is with the soul of man. It is full of good dispositions; of kind impulses; of true affections; of wholesome fruits. But besides these, the mind of man is full of frets, and peevish murmurings, and the stinging nettles of pride, and vanities flaunting coarse colors. A soul's power to produce pleasure or pain in another is very great. If it throw over on its fellows the whole force of its excellence and its beauty, it can produce great cheer and great delight. But if the soul of man scowl over upon its neighbors, it is organized to produce very great pain and trouble. We are commanded, therefore, so to use the whole of ourselves that from day to day we shall produce pleasure among those with whom we consort. It is not left optional with us, whether men shall be made happier by our going among them. It is not left to us to produce pleasure in occasional moments. It is a commandment that includes the whole of our nature, and the whole of our time. We are to be such and to live in such a way that wherever we go we shall *please men for their good to edification*,—please them in such a way that they shall be more manly afterwards than they were before. The soul finds in the reason an infinite field of material from which to select the implements of pleasing. Its affections are full of sweetness as the honey-comb is of honey. Its wit, its taste and its imagination, are

SUNDAY MORNING, Jan. 15, 1871. LESSON: ROM. xiv. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 1344, 898, 1262.

potent engineers of pleasure. But these are just as strong to produce discontent, and irritation, and a sense of painful inferiority and general unhappiness, in other people.

Now, beside the great ends which men are commanded to seek—their manhood here, and their immortality hereafter—there is a distinct command that they shall so carry themselves in the weighty business of life, that they shall make all around them happy. And not occasionally, by a gleam and a smile. It is to enter into our fundamental notion of the carriage of our lives. We are deliberately and anxiously to cast out from ourselves those elements that make needless pain; and we are to cultivate and employ—and that generously and continuously—those elements which make pleasure, and which make our fellow-men happier.

Making people happy is neither a small nor an unimportant business. As I regard good nature as one of the richest fruits of true Christianity, so I regard the making of people round about us happy as one of the best manifestations of that Christian disposition which we are commanded to wear as a garment.

In our Lord's own life, it is manifest that he did, day by day, a multitude of things for the mere sake of soothing trouble; of calming irritation; of smoothing asperities; of producing amiable feelings. While he instructed men, while he inspired them with noble heroisms and ambitions, his life was also filled up with a thousand small shades of goodness, whose very nature it was to make men contented and happy. And his example is expressly quoted in the context, for our imitation.

First, in the great movement of human life, men find the lower side of their nature played upon more than the upper side. We are brought in contact with the world through our appetites, through our passions, through those faculties which belong to our physical organization. These baser instincts are apt to sink down into an animal life. We drudge by them. They are unable to rouse themselves. Men are often unable to excite their better nature. The thousands and thousands who are poor, who are unsuccessful, who are feeble, who are perpetually in ill-luck, are liable to dwell in the low and chilly fog of fret and discontent. The undertone of human life is very sad. The household does not ring out, except here and there, like a well-tuned instrument. It is cheerless, it is solitary, it is voiceless, or it quarrels, or it drones, or it droops, or it drudges. Men that we meet—the select, the fortunate, whom by elective affinity we naturally take to ourselves—they sparkle upon us, and we sparkle back upon them; but in every trade, in every profession, in every kind of business,

is a middle line; and below that men are living with but very little cheer, with comparatively little comfort, with much fear, with much sorrow, and with many malign passions.

Now, it is not simply our duty as Christians to make known a historical Gospel. Our duty as Christians is not simply to go out after men that enthrone themselves outside of morality. Here, at our right hand, and at our left—all about us—society is full of men whose lives average but very little sweetness. And it is for us to please them; to seek to make them happier. This we do if we have a purpose to serve. If we desire to use men in any way selfishly, we seek to please them. But the command is that we shall do it benevolently: that the way in which we carry ourselves shall not be merely to avoid evil and to maintain our own uprightness; but in maintaining our uprightness we are so to carry ourselves that the vibrations of our hearts shall bring music out of the hearts of others.

The business of making men happy that are not happy does not lie half so near to the consciousness of men as it ought to. If it is in the power of men to touch the higher nature, and to rouse men to cheer, to good nature, to hope, to good will, to mirth, to courage, then this is a part of their Christian duty.

What is an *adagio* from one of Beethoven's symphonies? What but a mere motion of the wind—a congeries of invisible pulsations in the air? And yet, when care has lowered, and life sits heavily on your heart, one half-hour in hearing such divine sounds renews your soul, and sends you away recreate. How much more, then, when not dead instruments, but the living faculties of a truly loving Christian soul, send forth their influence! How the heart of man can make the heart of man pulsate with pleasure, if it will!

Some men move through life as a band of music moves down the street, flinging out pleasure on every side through the air to every one, far and near, that can listen. Some men fill the air with their presence and sweetness as orchards, in October days, fill the air with the perfume of ripe fruit. Some women, cling to their own houses like the honeysuckle over the door, yet like it fill all the region with the subtle fragrance of their goodness. How great a bounty and a blessing is it so to hold the royal gifts of the soul that they shall be music to some, and fragrance to others, and life to all! It would be no unworthy thing to live for, to make the power which we have within us the breath of other men's joy; to fill the atmosphere which they must stand in, with a brightness which they cannot create for themselves.

Men neglect frequently these very simple and very obvious truths, because there is still a remnant of stoicism and asceticism

among good men, leading to an unexpressed contempt for happiness-making. There are many men who feel that being happy is well enough in its way, but that its way is a very superficial way. "Oh," say they, "make men better, make them strong, make them pure, and then their happiness will take care of itself." They undervalue the moral results of making men superficially happy. For much of men's selfishness, and querulousness, and pain-making, springs from their own unhappiness. And whatever shall take that away will tend to make them better; and they in turn will make others better. A gentle happiness is favorable to virtue and to morality, as excessive excitement and warring and discontent are favorable to murmurings, and to rebellion, and to sin. And he who can please his neighbor in things good, is actually making his neighbor a better man by making him a happier man.

Men feel that life has far weightier duties, however, than tickling each other's fancies. There are many men who think that every one should take care of himself. They say, "My business is to be honest, and true, and right, and just, in the main; but it is not my business to go round tickling people's palms to see them laugh." Yet you have no business to be just and true and honest and right in such a way that those who stand next to you shall be less happy by your way of being honest and true and right and just. Of all creatures, there is not one that has a better right to be a hedgehog than a hedgehog; but is he a good neighbor? Is he a pleasant bosom companion? A thistle, standing in the corner of the garden, where the gate opens, all men have to avoid; but it never avoids any that it can scratch. A thistle has been ordained, and belongs to the economy of nature; and yet, is it the model of a man? How many men there are, who, blunt, rude of speech, and thoughtless of expression, go thrusting here, and piercing there, and treading down sensitiveness on every side, with no other excuse except this: "Well, I believe in a straight, out-and-out kind of blunt man. Jack Blunt is my model!" Undoubtedly, and a very bad model very well imitated, too!

No man has a right to carry himself in such a way that he shall gash his fellow-men; in such a way that he shall strike them by rudeness, either of the tongue or of the hand.

If a man should swing himself through an orphan asylum, saying, "I like to see a manly carriage, and I like to see a man take as much air as belongs to him;" if he should sweep past the children, knocking them right and left, and saying, "Let others take care of themselves!" he would be turned out as a brute, and would deserve to be. And yet, how many men go through life carrying their

tongue, carrying their temper, carrying their whole disposition, so that wherever they go, men, though they say, "There is much that is good in them," dread them, and expect that somebody will suffer before they get away.

Oftentimes it is set down to the credit of blunt honesty; and men say, "How much better it is, after all, to have a man who speaks his mind, than to have one of these Machiavelian men, who is all smirks, and full of gentleness, and very inoffensive, but in whose exceeding good nature you know there is not a particle of sincerity!"

But why not have a man *right?* Why not have a man that is just and true and honest, and that so carries his honesty and truth and justice as to be pleasant to men, and not painful? Why should any one go about perpetually with his nails uncut, so that they shall scratch and give pain to all who take his hand?

Love has no duties that can be put aside worthily. Even when love demands that we shall produce pain, it is to be done in the spirit of benevolence. The essential spirit of Christianity requires that men shall so carry themselves in the weightiest affairs of life that they shall please their neighbors and their friends *for good to edification; for even Christ pleased not himself.* He lived, not for his own comfort and convenience, but for the welfare of other people.

We are not at liberty, as I have already intimated, to please by pandering to the bad elements in men's characters. We have no right to make men happy by feeding their malice; by feeding their avarice; by feeding their unmanly appetites. We must move upon the right feelings in men, and not stir up the wrong ones, nor the evil ones. It is not only for us to make men happier, but to make them happier by using that which is best in them, and that which is best in ourselves, and so promoting the reign of good will and of peace.

"Blessed are the peace-makers."

Yes; and I think you might construe that without violence so as to make it read, *Blessed are the* HAPPINESS-MAKERS. Blessed are they that take away attritions; that remove friction; that make the courses of life smooth, and the intercourse of men gentle. Blessed are they who know how to shine on one's gloom with their cheer. Blessed are they whom God has equipped with humor, and wit, and a good imagination, and a buoyant temperament. They are God's torch-bearers, sent to those that sit in darkness and despondency, to cheer them.

Sometimes men have thought that it was useful for a Christian to lay aside smiles and laughter and gayety. Nay! nay! Till the world weeps less, I think there should be more smiles. Till the world sorrows less, there should be more gayety. Till the world

lives better, there should be more of the imagination and of refined taste thrown over the rude forms of actuality in life. They should count themselves signally blessed of God who are endowed with a nature so full of pity, and kindness, and love, and imagination, and taste, and music, that they can throw these joy-bearing elements abundantly out of themselves, and make the whole of life around about them sweeter and truer and happier. Blessed are they to whom people go when they are in distress! Blessed are they around whom little children flock! Blessed are they that are sent for by men when they are in extremities and emergencies! Blessed are they upon whom grateful eyes look, saying, "Come again; I am better for your coming." Blessed are they in whose presence the dust of care is laid by moistening drops! Blessed are they whose eye is serene; whose voice is gentle; whose heart is sweet; whose life makes happiness!

In order to this, as you will see in a moment, there must be a discipline in ourselves. It is not possible for us to be under the dominion of malign feelings, and conceal it from others. There is a certain degree of concealment possible; but all hidings of the actual states in a man, are actually impossible. In the free intercourse of human life you carry to men the faculties that are active in you, and generally excite, or tend to excite, in them, precisely the same feelings. If you are irritable, you tend to produce irritation. If you are proud, you tend to excite pride, and the resistance of pride. If you go to men with envyings, if you meet them with jealousies, if you bear to them the atmosphere of selfishness and self-seeking, they catch the infection from you. And these feelings never, in you nor in any other person, ministered to cheer. There is no comfort in them. They are sand in the teeth. Obstinacy, arrogance, self-opinionated ways, sneering, critical, cynical, teasing, disputative dispositions — those ugly-quilled dispositions which so many men pride themselves in having, so that no one can touch them without being pricked—all these are hateful in you, and are hateful in their effects upon others. No man can be happy himself, or promote happiness in other men, until he has learned to put to sleep these malign faculties every day. Pride must go down, or be clothed in the garments of benevolence. Vanity must not be allowed to dominate the other parts of the mind. It is not possible for you to be watching the faults of your fellow-men, and at the same time make them happy. It is not possible for you to be intolerant in the construction which you put upon men's conduct; it is not possible for you to be cynical in your intercourse with them; it it is not possible for you to tease them, and with ten thousand petty

disputations or murmurings to fill up the hours in their presence, and yet convey happiness to them. It is not the one little thing that we do now and then that makes life what it is: it is the sum of the million little unconscious dispositions that go to make life joyful or painful.

The whole machinery of life, then, needs a great deal of oiling in you, in order that you may minister to the wants of others. We are not simply to carry happiness to those that are around about us—to those that are in our own circle. The context from which we have selected the theme of our morning's remarks indicates a much wider scope than this.

In the olden time, it was generally thought that we should love our friends and hate our enemies. In the modern time, it has been thought that we should love our own denomination, and hate those that are heretical. Therefore there has been felt to be a solemn duty incumbent on the Catholic to hate Protestants; and there has been felt to be a corresponding duty incumbent on the Protestant to hate Catholics.

Now, it is my business as a Protestant Christian man so to treat all Catholics that I shall *please them, for their good, to edification.* It is my business, standing in this desk, to be sure to speak the truth; but if possible, so to speak it that it shall be divested of offense. And if it is unwelcome, it is my business to make it as little unwelcome as it is in the power of skill to make it.

I remember the time when if a clergyman of another sect came into a church, the minister of that church felt himself called upon to take up that part of the battle which had reference to that sect. So the Arminian gave his opinion of Calvinism roundly to the intrusive Calvinist; and afterwards, when the Calvinist got the Arminian in *his* grip, he paid him off by giving him his opinion of Arminianism. And if we meet a man whose belief clashes with ours, we think it our business to give him some side-long blow that shall remind him of what he is, and what he is not. It is supposed that religionists are ordained to war; and so two doctrines meet each other as two dogs, strangers in the neighborhood, with risings in the back, with growlings in the mouth, and with eyes full of anything but amiableness. Men come together for attrition; they come together to stir each other up; they come together to see what advantage they can gain over each other.

For a thousand years the experiment has been tried, of bombarding men into love and faith; and with what luck? Is it not time to see if we cannot *love* men into unity; if we cannot *please* men into unity; if we cannot drop the things that are disagreeable,

and insist upon the things that are *pleasing, for good, to edification?* When will the time come that Christians shall not feel obliged to rasp one another, to criticise one another, to sit in judgment upon one another? When will the time come that it shall be as it is between two neighbors? When shall it be that, as when one neighbor visits the house of another, he feels himself called upon to compliment the house, to admire the pictures, to praise the rare paragon that sports upon the carpet, so men shall feel, when they meet together in each other's churches, that they must select the things that are pleasant and that can be praised, and let alone the things that are disagreeable, and that cannot be praised?

As it is in religious matters, so should it be in civil. There are times when men must stand in politics for principles. There are times when men must have success; when great issues depend upon it; and at such times men cannot avoid doing things that will give pain. But this fact furnishes no criterion for the average of cases. Ordinarily, men who come together knowing that they are on different sides in philosophy, or in politics, or in business, if they be Christian men, should rouse up their memory, and bear in mind that they are to *please one another, for good, to edification*, and not irritate and chafe and hurt each other. There is no business in this world that is so poor as producing pain; and there is no business in this world that is diviner than producing the higher forms of happiness and pleasure.

"In honor preferring one another."

"With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love."

See the mother, worn; see her cheeks, sunken; see her eye, lacking the rest which nights and nights of watching have robbed it of; see how her hand trembles; see how unreasonable the child is upon her knee; see how hard it is to tend it, and to cleanse it how loathsome; see how full of frets the child is, and how each act of kindness it repels! And yet love wears out the weary hours, linked one with another; and all day long the mother wears herself out, in love serving the little child.

"Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Talk about hymns; talk about prayers; talk about ecstatic experiences; talk about the joys and raptures of religious meetings! I believe in them all; but not for people who do not know how to humble themselves, and to go down and serve the poor, and needy, and inferior, and those that cannot pay them again. You are to suspect your raptures when you are selfish in the details of your life. God does not send angels to sing to the top of your life.

If these views are correct and are important, then there is a new element of personal piety that should enter into the conception of every one. We ask men whether they are willing to leave off every known sin, and join themselves to the people of God, and be valiant for the faith, and by the faith, with men. We ask them if they will maintain temperateness and morality and virtue. We ask them if they will go in and out among the people of God in an exemplary manner. But how seldom do we question men as to beneficence of disposition! How seldom do we follow up those who think that they are born again, to ascertain whether the light is with them; whether they are luminous! How seldom do we inquire whether parents find it easier to get along with their children than they did before they united with the church, whether the companions of young people find them more mellow, more rich-hearted, more generous, more manly, pleasanter to be with; whether men are more attractive after they have joined the church than they were before!

I have known men who were genial, winning, happiness-producing. They were converted, and they joined the church, and then they became crustaceous, self-centred, full of thoughts of a noble life. They withdrew from all pleasure. They withdrew much from society. They turned their attention to weightier things.

I tell you that there is nothing in this world which a man can so ill afford to turn away from, as producing happiness by the power of a true Christian spirit of love; and when a man has gone into the service of God ostensibly and externally, and is less sweet, less genial, less happiness-producing than he was before, there is something wrong. He has made a mistake somewhere—and the worst mistake that he could make. He has made the mistake of setting aside the principle of benevolence.

When, then, we are bringing men into the kingdom of God; when we are indoctrinating them into Christian truth, not less should we tell them of the great doctrines; not less should we hold up before them the important element of manhood to be perfected in Christ Jesus; not less should we inspire them with heroic enterprise in doing good; but there are thousands of men who are attempting to *do good*, who never had it enter into their minds that they were to *make happiness*. They do not make it at home. They do not make it in the shop, among their companions. They do not make it on the sidewalk, in those that walk with them. They do not, wherever they are, exhale happiness. Yet they want to *do good*. They will task themselves; they will carry burdens; they will bear cares; they will lay foundations operose. These things are not wrong nor unwise; but the art of making the eye and the tongue and the hand confer happiness on men has not entered into their minds.

You never can make the camelia worth what the rose is; because the camelia, though perfectly symmetrical, is cold and odorless. Without perfume, or anything to recommend it but its symmetry, it lies before you, saying, "Did you ever see anything so perfect as I am?" The rose is as beautiful; but, oh! the whole room, to-day, will be filled with the fragrance of a tea-rose, though but one blossom is opening. And no man's heart should be a camelia-heart. Men's hearts should be rose-hearts, that blossom in them, and sweeten with flowers the whole air.

If I were to carry home this subject to the household, are there not many families that would bear some reformation? Are there not fathers whose good-nature does not dawn upon them until after breakfast? Are there not mothers who find fault with everything till they have swallowed their cup of tea? Are there not many who are wound up late in the day? Are there not many families where there is altercation among the children, and quarreling between the children and the parents? Are there not many households where there are little feuds that are kept up from day to day, and from week to week, and where the adversaries are watching each other, and waiting for a chance to pay off the indignities that they have received? Are there not many families where, though there may be incidental kindnesses (they do not object to these), the thought is, how to come up one with another; how to pay off some grudge? On the other hand, how many households are there that call themselves Christians, and have a right to, because all day long each one is shining on the others; because each one is removing obstructions, taking away attritions, smoothing asperities, and seeking to make all amiable and all happy? Such *are* Christian households.

Now, is there nothing in your household to change? Is there nothing in your disposition to rectify? Is there nothing in your purpose to be made different? Is it an aim that you have constantly before your mind, to so carry yourself that every one in your presence shall go away feeling that for a time, at any rate, he has been made happy? Beautiful natures are they—and there are such natures—which send out to all who approach their coasts the fragrance of the land.

When, after the long, loathsome voyage, I entered the channel, and saw, dim, upon the horizon, the blue line of shore, and smelled the strange odor in the air, I said to my noble friend, Capt. Knight, "What is this smell?" "Bless your heart!" said he, "it is the *land smell.*" All the smells of the sea put together were never so sweet as the land-smell. Afar off the land was; it lay like a little ribbon on the horizon; and yet, it sent its odor clear out to where we were.

There are persons so lovely that you cannot go near to them with-

out perceiving that they exhale gladness and cheer and happiness. Blessed are such! Blessed are the happiness-makers!

How much would neighbors rise in value, and how much would neighbors rise in beauty, if all should lay aside habits of criticism, and neighborhood scandal, and petty feuds, and ridicule! And if men should study the things that make for peace, and the things that make for happiness, everybody trying to make everybody else happy, what a revolution there would be!

I believe in revivals; but I have never known any revivals that did not need to have other revivals in them. I have known men revived from intemperance and from wickedness, who went into churches and into neighborhoods where they set themslves up on their orthodoxy and their propriety, and carried themselves so unsocially, so critically, and oftentimes so offensively, that they exerted no happiness-producing power. No person has drunk in the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ who does not make other persons happier when he comes to them.

It is not enough, then, for us to ask, "Am I true? Am I just? Am I honest? Am I religious?" The question for us is, "Am I every day a maker of happiness?" God is. All holy spirits in heaven are. When I think of heaven, I do not think of angels standing like wax candles in long altar-rows, singing hymns of praise: I think of saintly life, of angelic life, the sweetest, the gayest, the most joyous, the most full of every mood of fancy and of goodness. I think of beings that carry light in the eye, and joy in the heart, and ecstasy in every touch. Are we going there with our sordid natures; with our coarse touch; with our selfish instincts; with our unsubdued pride; with our uncombed and disheveled vanity? Let us be followers of Jesus, who did not please himself, but who left, by the lips of his apostle, the declaration, LET EVERY ONE OF US PLEASE HIS NEIGHBOR, FOR HIS GOOD, TO EDIFICATION?"

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We rejoice in the thought of thy being, O Lord our God. There is none other beside thee. There is need of none other. Thou art sovereign and infinite in all excellence. What thou art, and what is the measure of thy being, we cannot understand. Nor by searching can we find thee out unto perfection. But we know that thou wilt differ from our thought only in being nobler, and more full of love and wisdom and grace. When we look upon things most fair and comely on the earth on which we tread, and know that they spring from thy thought; when we behold what are the experiences of the human soul in its best estate we rejoice to believe that the One who hath fashioned, and, from age to age, distributed such things, must be himself transcendent in them all. More glorious than earthly glory, more noble in love than all the experience of love among men, art thou. We yet stoop so low that we bear with us something of the earth from which we sprang. Opaque in our affection, not able to redeem ourselves from the things which we subsist upon, how can we find in our mutable and varying affection, that which shall be the measure of thine, or that which shall suggest the excellence which is in thee? We know that thou art true; but what truth is in its boundlessness, we cannot imagine. We know that thou art just; but from the adulterated justice, so full of selfishness and passion, that we have beheld upon earth, how can we learn the justice of love? We know that thou art love; but who among the sons of men have known any such disinterestedness of love as would be a fit example of thy loving nature? We know that thou dost abound in all excellence; but our thought of excellence is so poor that we diminish thee by thinking of thee. When we see thee as thou art, we shall look back upon our past knowledge here as one who has reached the estate of manhood looks back upon the knowledge of his childhood. We see through a glass darkly and shall be rebuked for our present presumption when we see thee face to face.

We pray that thou wilt grant unto us, then, a humble and a continually yearning desire to have in ourselves such moods and such dispositions as shall minister to us better, holier and truer thoughts of God. As thou hast preserved us by thy power, so enrich us by thy grace. Fill us with all gentleness and meekness and truthfulness. Grant that we may abound in those things in which thou dost delight, and put far away from us those things which thou hatest. May we learn to cure ourselves of pride, and of selfishness, and of cruelty, and of envyings, and of jealousies, and of avarice, and of wickedness. May we put on the new man created in righteousness in Christ Jesus.

We pray that thou wilt strengthen us from day to day in our several spheres of labor. Thou hast ordained our path, and thou knowest the innermost thought afar off; thou seest the beginnings of feeling; and we are altogether naked and open before thee, with whom we have to do. And we rejoice in it, and commit ourselves to thy care, and are glad that it is God, and not man, that deals with us.

And now, O Lord our God, as we have been borne upon the bosom of thy love and mercy in days gone by, there still will we rest. In thee will we confide; in thee we will be strong.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt prepare us for the unknown future, for the passage of death, and for immortality and glory in heaven. Draw near to all in thy presence who specially need thy comforting hand. If there be those who are bereaved; if there be those who go through baths of sorrow; if there be those over whom pass clouds and storms; if there be those who are sick at heart from hope deferred; if there be those who are in

great perplexity; if there be those who are friendless; if there be any that mourn the distance which there is between thyself and them, and who come to thee for counsel and help; if there be those who sit in the darkness of remorse, as under the shadow of death—O Lord! we pray for all of them. We pray that by the Holy Spirit they may be comforted, and that thy presence may be to them as the light in the morning is to the watcher of the night.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those in our midst who are strangers in a strange land. We pray that thou wilt consider them to-day, and give them a double portion from our Father's table. And if their thoughts go backward to those whom they have left far away, sanctify to them their separation, and sustain them, and restore them again, by and by, to those whom they love, witnesses of God's great goodness.

We pray that thou wilt accept the thanks of all those whom thou hast delivered, for their deliverance: of all those whom thou hast raised up from beds of sickness; of all those who have escaped from great fears of evil; of all those who have been in perils of storm upon the sea, and have been brought safely to land. Will the Lord hear all those who render their vows to-day. May thy blessing rest upon all those who are laboring to benefit others, whether it be parents for their children, or teachers for children in schools. We pray that the Spirit of the Lord may be with them and bless them in all their labors of love.

We pray that thou wilt bless all that preach the Gospel to-day, everywhere. Give them strength of body and strength of heart. As their day is, so may their strength be also.

Bring together the scattered forms of thy Church. May there be unity of spirit. May the hearts of thy people, united in love, come up before thee in cöoperative desire and labor. We pray for thy kingdom all over the earth in which dwelleth righteousness.

May wars cease. May all superstition and ignorance be purged out of the world. May the earth receive its long-delayed promise, and Jesus reign a thousand years. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt teach us the inward life—the true life of Christian love. May we love thee. May we be inspired with the noblest ambition. Bear us beyond the sphere of sense and into the realm of faith. May we be filled with philanthropy. May we seek to do good that we do not see in the doing. May we be felt afar off—further than our own hand can reach. And by our minds, by our influence, may we build foundations whose superstructure we shall never see in this life. May we seek to labor in season and out of season, admonishing, rebuking, with all long-suffering and gentleness. But in all things may we be clothed in charity as with a garment. Having put on all other things, may we put on, to clasp them, the girdle of true benevolence. And teach us so to carry our dispositions, our thoughts and feelings, that there shall ray out light perpetually from ourselves upon all that are with us. May we grow more gentle, more heavenly, more like our Master, until we are called home above, where we shall need no more teaching, and no more admonition. And to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, shall be praises evermore *Amen.*

THE POWER OF HUMBLE FIDELITY.

"And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples and saith unto them, Verily, I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living."—Mark xii.41–44.

We are to make much allowance for those rapturous expressions that we find even in the Old Testament, respecting the beauty of Jerusalem.

"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, the city of our God."

I should have esteemed this old people less, if they had not thought that their home and their city were more beautiful than any other in the world. Do we not do the same thing? Do we not indulge in gentle exaggerations as respects the flavor of the water of our father's well? None other in the world was like it, to our thinking. And the apples that grew in the orchard—how excellent they were! Nowhere shall we find again such apples of paradise as we ate in our youth. And the very brook, and the overhanging trees—yea, the brown old house, from which the red has almost been beaten by rains and winds—where shall we find anything, on the whole, more charming to our eyes? For it is love that is the artist, and carves, and throws a strange beauty over everything that the heart adopts. And so the homely old cradle, and the grotesque pump, and the queer furnishing of the house, and the ordinary tree, and the common well of common water—these things are all magnified and glorified in the affections of our childhood.

We do not wonder, therefore, that the Jews thought there never was another such city as Jerusalem—and in some respects there never was. But they thought it was wonderful in beauty. It was very far from it. Probably there is but one way in which we can come upon that city, and have it seem very comely, and produce any impression, although our imagination is charmed with associations of

SUNDAY MORNING, Jan. 22, 1871. LESSON: ISA. LVII. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 40, 843, 879.

every description, and comes, not only with a painter's zeal, but with the enthusiasm of the historian and the devotee, to find everything there that is stately and beautiful. It is very common-place except as you go in from the East. From that side it is striking. Looked upon from the hills, upon the far side of which Bethany stands—looked upon from the valley of the Kedron, Jerusalem is still very striking and impressive.

It was upon that very side that the temple stood. And when we speak of the temple, you must dismiss from your mind all conception of some Grecian temple, or of some Gothic cathedral, or of any other building such as you see in modern times. For the temple was not so much a building as a complex citadel. It was a system of courts, open mostly to the heaven, and surrounded by massive walls, magnificent in the size of the stones, and in their beauty. Rising and covering over the summit of one part of the hill, court within court, the temple system stood. The Temple proper was quite a small building, comparatively speaking, upon the very top level, while graded all the way down from it were these successive, and for the most part open courts, surrounded by walls made gorgeous by whatever treasure could confer. And when the Jews drew near from the East to their favorite haunt or place of worship, it presented, in the blaze of the sun, a magnificent shining spectacle.

It was in this temple that the most of Christ's instruction was given which took place in Jerusalem. It was not according to a custom of the nation, nor according to climatic conditions, that instruction should take place in the streets; and still less, that it should take place in buildings, of which there were none large enough to hold the masses of persons who were perpetually following the footsteps of our Master.

The outer court of the temple was called "The Court of the Gentiles," because the Gentiles were permitted to go up into it (they were permitted to go no further under pain of death). On the south side of the base of the quadrangle was Herod's porch—a very magnificent covered way. It is supposed that in that porch, which was open on the temple side, though it was closed on the side looking to the south, Christ principally taught his disciples. For synagogues were held there; and there were schools there—peripatetic schools; and throngs of men resorted thither, as with us they resort on market-days to the Exchange. There were all sorts of Exchanges there. And there it was, as I said, that Christ mostly taught.

But as you ascended, step by step, some fifteen feet, you came into a second series of courts. And in one of these was placed the treasury. It seems that on one occasion the Master was sitting

there with the disciples, or near them, watching what took place. And what did take place?

There were Jews passing, an endless procession of them, and depositing in the chest or chests that were set there their annual gifts or offerings. For the support of the temple-service these gifts were made. Not alone from the inhabitants of the land, but from the world—the then civilized world—flowed gifts; and probably more came from outside the bounds of Palestine than from within them. For, at this time the Jews had been brought so much under the dominion of the Greeks, that they had become commercialized. And having been driven hither and thither by the conflicts of revolution, they had been, as it were, drained out of the land.: so that there was no conspicuous city on the globe where commerce held its marts, that the Jews were not beginning to be known in it.

Thus Christ saw, undoubtedly, Jews coming from every city in Asia where they had trafficked, bringing their wealth back to their native land, and to their beautiful temple. He saw men from Alexandria, and Cairo, and all the other Egyptian cities; He saw men from Greece, and Rome, and from the furthermost parts of Italy, coming with annual, or biennial, or more or less frequent gifts in their hands. And there were among them many who had magnificent wealth; many who were princely in their possessions. And they were accompanied by trains which corresponded with their wealth. They had with them retinues of servants to bring their offerings. One and another and another stepped forward. And there were the admiring spectators. This was of Asia; and this was of Babylon; and this was of Ephesus, and this was of Greece or Rome.

So, one by one they came. It was a great day of gifts. One train after another swept by, and these gifts were deposited in the resounding chest—bars of gold, bullion, great masses of the precious metal—often requiring the chest to be taken away and changed.

While this was going on, there came, like a very, very small punctuation point, a poor creature, hesitating between the grandees, with worn sandals, and with garments tattered, and with her head bowed. Standing meekly aside and watching her opportunity, she at last slipped in her offering. So small was it, that you might have listened and you could not have heard it chink. It is said to have been "two mites." Upon computation it may be found that a mite was one-twentieth part of a penny, so that her two mites amounted to one-tenth of a penny. Therefore it was almost like dust in her hand; and I am not exaggerating when I say that you could not have heard it fall into the chest—especially after the ringing of the plump bullion of some big Jew.

She dropped in her offering, and quickly drew aside and went away, and did not know that anybody saw her, as probably nobody did among the Jews; and did not know that any one cared for her, as in all that throng probably none did, save One; and certainly did not know that after two thousand years, her name being lost, her deed of heroism would be the theme of instruction and of inspiration to you and to me to-day, as it has been to tens of thousands of Christians since then. This poor, meanly clad, solitary widow threw in her tenth part of a penny and retired. And the narrative goes on.

"He called unto him his disciples."

They, however, had not seen the act; or they were but just within glancing distance. He beckoned to them and pointed out what was done. And he said unto them,

"Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury."

And then he gave his reasons:

"For they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

It would seem, then, that she had had that day no food; that she had denied herself. She had thrown in all she had with which to buy sustenance. And Christ, who knew all things, and needed not that any should tell him anything, saw this in all its beauty and simplicity and moral significance. He could not lose such a text as that. And, calling his disciples to him, he instructed them in one of the most important moral truths that can be presented to the mind of man.

This action on her part was an action of great disinterestedness; for she knew perfectly well that if she gave nothing none would miss it. She knew perfectly well that if she gave something none would notice it. She knew perfectly well that the little which she could give would be of no importance, in itself, to the treasury or to the temple. Besides, it was all that she had to subsist on that day; and as she gave that, it must have been to meet a want in her own soul, of generosity. She could not endure to have the service of the temple go on, and she bear no part in it. Though what she could give was very little indeed, that she must be permitted to give, for the sake of her own feelings rather than on account of its value.

It was not literally true that she gave more than all of them; but she gave more compared to what she had to give. Nor was her gift equal to theirs when its direct uses were considered. Their gifts were not to be despised. There was a good reason why gifts should be made, and unquestionably a thousand pounds would be more in maintaining the service of the sanctuary than the mites of the poor widow. But Christ was not measuring value in that direction. He

was making the action the test of disposition. It was not what the power of money was; it was not what it could do upon the world; it was the disposition which went with the money, that Christ was measuring. He was measuring its force, its magnitude. He was measuring, therefore, by the principle of generosity. And the smallest gift of that day, measured thus, was larger than the greatest gift.

For, do you suppose, that among all those who bestowed their gifts at that time, before her, and after her, there was a single other one who gave from so pure a motive, from so deep a love, and at such sacrifice? There were gifts, many of them of vanity, many of them of pride, many of them of superstition, many of them of mere custom and necessity; but hers was a voluntary gift of love. And that fact consecrated it. Love imparts a value to a gift which nothing but love can stamp upon it.

1. This is a striking illustration of our Lord's sympathy for the heart of human life instead of for its exterior. He was sitting in the very culmination of the pride and beauty of the Jewish ceremonial. He was surrounded by the garmented priests. There were the learned men of his time. There was the sovereign authority of his nation. Around about him were men from every clime. There was great stir, great interest, great excitement among them. He looked upon all these things; and what he thought is not recorded; but we may well conclude, when this was the one feature of the whole scene, which he fixed his eye upon and dwelt upon, that he was not attracted by the sumptuous trains of these gorgeous gift-bringers. He did not look upon all the unworldliness of these religionists with interest. He saw among them that which interpreted the innermost and the best nature. That which was highest, that which was true, that which was piteous, that which was humane, that which was gentle, that which was generous—this was what he saw. And all the more if no one else was likely to see it. It was the disposition of Christ, not as man, but as God, to bring himself into sympathy with that side of human life which is the most piteous and the most necessitous. Where human life needs the most sympathy, and where usually it is the most barren—there is where Christ is more likely to be found than anywhere else.

Interpreting this trait which we behold in his earthly life into divinity, or into the other life, it becomes a trait of transcendent importance; and we begin to understand something of that divine feeling. For now, in heaven, as then upon earth, only in larger circles, and with grander developments, the same disposition is in Christ to be in sympathy with things that are lowly and needy, things that are helpless, and things that are piteous. Where human strength

usually disdains to notice—there is the very point at which divine strength notices most. Where men see least to be admired, under uncouth forms of helplessness; and where there is a want of productive power, and an absence of positive force of any kind; where being seems ground down to its lowest estate—there, men look with scarcely veiled contempt, and esteem things to be vulgar: but there is where Christ looks with sympathy and compassion.

And we have the revelation of the same truth in the Gospel of Isaiah, from which it was borrowed—for the prophecy of Isaiah may as well be called *the first Gospel*—where Christ declares that he dwells with the humble and contrite and broken in heart.

This revelation, which was made in the early days, and which was confirmed by the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, put upon the whole Divine government a new aspect to us, of great comfort and encouragement. For, while we see things in this world going to the strong hand; while philosophy takes care of the thinker; while fame takes care of the successful; while mammon takes care of the skilled and fortunate; while in all the thoroughfares of life the strong crowd the weak to the wall, and have compassion in the great battle of life only on those that are able to stand, and tread down those that are humbler and weaker, it is well to know that there is a revelation which nature does not make—a revelation of the heart of God, and of a disposition in which there is thought, feeling, desire, sympathy, for those who are too weak to take care of themselves; too feeble to report themselves by anything that they can do among their fellow-men. If human life takes care of the successful, the Divine government takes care of the unsuccessful. If men crown the eminent, God crowns the lowly. If men look after and serve those that are conspicuous, God searches out and thinks of those that are inconspicuous and humble. The great Eye is not looking out for great deeds alone—though they are recognized. God is not thinking of the men who are thinking most of themselves, nor of those of whom men are thinking most. God's disposition and government take in the great under-class of men. The myriads are noted and registered whose deeds are done in secret in this world. The sorrows of those for whom no men sorrow; and the tears of those that weep in secret places; and the yearnings of those that have no answer to their desires; and the prayers of the distressed that seem to die in the air, rising in simple petitions or on the wings of song; and the experiences of those that seem to be swept hither and thither by the current of fortune and of life, as the dust is swept by the whirlwind on the summer road—it is good to know that the eye of God

ever looks upon these things. It is good to know that somebody takes care of the neglected ; that somebody thinks of those that are unthought of; that somebody, whose nature is all-powerful, and who is all-glorious, will, by and by, speedily come to judgment, and reward his own whom the whole world despise.

2. Many of the secret fidelities of life have power to outlive, in usefulness, the products of ambitious desires and deeds. All the rich gifts of the temple are now forgotten. We do not know what princes were there. We do not know what rabbi was syllabled with admiration among his fellows, on that day. We do not know what eminent man of wealth that had traveled from afar was pointed out—yea was courted and caressed—on account of his munificence. The only person who has come down to us is the one who was the least conspicuous, and the least known. The gentle light of that example shines still. Ten thousand there were of greater mark ; but only she lives. And all the ages have not buried her. All illustrious history has not set aside that simple unconscious act. All the events of revolutions and upturnings that have happened since, have made no change in her renown. There is the temple; there is the gorgeous procession; there is the poor shuffling widow; there is the quiet Christ, over against her ; there is the pleased eye ; there is the benign lip ; there are those words of regard and sympathy ; and they will sound like strains of music which cannot be lost out of life.

How little she thought what she was doing ! How little she thought how much she was enriching the world ! Two mites—one tenth of a penny—she threw into the chest ; and she has made the world richer than all the tributes which were paid that year in Jerusalem, by her unconscious humility, and by her simple generosity and benevolence.

It is still the same. We think those gifts most influential which have most of record ; but it is not so. I believe that the God who made this case so eminent, I believe that that ascended Christ who so emphasized this little history that it has been fruit-bearing for thousands of years, still administers in the same way. And while he does not repudiate, while he does not reject the services that are more conspicuous, and that have their echo and their report, I believe that those things which will be most blest of God, as will be seen at the revelation of the last day, will be the things which have been quite unknown in this world. When the buried things shall be brought forth ; when the silent thoughts shall have some exposition ; when the motives, and the impulses, and the deep feelings, and the actions to which they lead, shall be all made known in the great

revealing day of the future; when people in the other life shall be in their aspect what their deeds and their dispositions make them to be in this life, then it will be found that those who are last here will be first there, and that those who are first here will be last there. While many a proud philanthropist whose name is carved and gilded over and over and over again will scarcely be seen, many strange philanthropists will emerge from among the poor and needy, and take their places as princes, eminent in the forefront of God's glory.

So God himself works. So gives he a pattern for us to work after. It is not the thunder which makes the most racket that does the most work. The things in this world that are accomplishing great deeds are silent things, and hidden things. And we are told, in a kind of strange parodox, that *the things which are not, are ordained to bring to nought the things that are.* The most inconspicuous things often belong to God's most potential working.

The root neither strives nor cries ; and yet, all the engines of all the ships and shops on earth, that puff and creak with ponderous working, are not to be compared for actual power with the roots of one single acre of ground in the meadow. All the vast pumps of Harlem Lake, and all that serve our needs, adjoining, are not to be compared for force with that might which inheres in one single tree. It is a fact revealed only to those who study natural history, that leaves, that vegetation, that dews, and rains, and heat, that the natural attractions which prevail in the world, without any echo or outward report, have an enormous power in them, and that they are the means by which God works. He works in silence, and inconspicuously, and almost hiddenly.

And so they work importantly who work by thought, by love, by zeal, by faith unrevealed ; who work in places not seen by the public eye, in season and out of season, from the mere desire to do good, and not from the mere love of being found out in doing it.

Look upon your scarfs, so brilliant. The color shines afar off. Comely it is in the vat of the dyer. Comely it is on the shoulder of beauty. How exquisite is the dye that comes from the cochineal insect. And yet, how small is that insect—scarcely, I may say, so big as the point of a pin—which feeds so inconspicuously on the under side of the leaf of the cactus, nourishing his growth quite unconscious that as one of all the myriads of all these little shining points will he by and by help to produce those glowing colors which civilization and refinement will make so meet and comely in distant lands ! So it is with good deeds. The great things in this world are the sum of infinitesimal little things. And those who are in sympathy with God and nature, are not to reject in men the ripening, the develop-

ment of themselves or their true spiritual life, because the effect is but little. That effect will be joined to other things which are like itself obscure, and others and others will make their contributions; and little by little the sum of these specks of gold will make masses of gold; little by little these small insects will make great quantities of coloring matter; little by little small things will become large in magnitude.

Do not be ashamed, then, to live in humility, if you fill it up with fidelity. Never measure the things that you do, or do not, by the report which they can make. Do well that which you do; do that which is right, and just, and good; and do not stand with your eye on those that watch you. Do the things which shall fill your heart with a sense of fidelity, of generosity, and of obedience to God; and then let God take care of the result. It will report itself by and by. The widow went away, after depositing her gift in the treasury; and I do not suppose that she knew until she got to Heaven that Christ ever thought of her. So it may be with you.

3. There are two spheres in which men must work. The first is that which judges of causes by their apparent relations to the end sought. That is important; but is not the only sphere. It is the visible material sphere—the one which belongs to the region of physical cause and effect. We are obliged to work in that sphere according to its own laws.

But in the moral sphere men must judge of acts by their relations to the motives and dispositions which inspire them; and they are great or little, not according to what they do, but according to the sources from which their actions spring.

In engineering, that only is great which *does*. It matters not what the intention is, he who in the day of battle is not victorious, is not saved by his intention. No matter how wisely you mean, if your timber is not squared and fitted right, the result is not right. In the outward sphere effect measures the worth of the plan. In that sphere effect must always be measured by the cause; and the worth of the cause must be proved by the effect. And that is the lower sphere.

In the moral sphere it is the other way. There, no matter what the effect is, you do not measure in that direction. Pray. Your prayer accomplishes nothing? The measure is not "What did it do?" Speak. Your words fall apparently uncaught and unprofitable? You do not measure in that direction. You measure the other way. What was it in your *heart* to do? What was your purpose? In the moral sphere we look at the bow—not at the target. From what motive did the soul project its purpose?

What gave that sigh? What issued that speech? What created that silence? What produced that moral condition? In that sphere the *heart* measures, estimates, registers.

This gives rise to thoughts which perhaps may have relation to ourselves.

There are many who will work if you will show them that their working will insure immediate good results. They will work in the moral sphere if they can work according to the genius of the visible or the physical sphere. They will work if they can do what others do. They do not work because they love to work. They do not work because they feel that it is their duty to work, simply, without regard to consequences. They are willing to work under the stimulus of a vain ambition. They will work if they may be praised. They will work if they are to receive an equivalent for their working in some appreciable form. The equivalent, oftentimes, for exertion, is praise or popularity. And thus men enter into the kingdom of God working for their own selves while they take to themselves the credit of working for God.

Disinterested labor—how little there is of it! How few there are outside of the household that work for others to gratify an intrinsic desire to do good! How few there are that work as Christ does, who works because he loves, and because he must do the will of his Father which is in heaven, which is his meat and drink! How few are there working in life who put forth exertion, not for the sake of what is right, but because their hearts are in sympathy with God's heart and because they desire to work! How few there are that work in order to give expression to their moral nature!

Do, then, whatever there is to be done without questioning and without calculation. Make progress in things moral. If need be, utter stammering words. Would you console the troubled if you only had a ready tongue? Take the tongue that you have. Ring the bell that hangs in your steeple, if you can do no better. Do as well as you can. That is all that God requires of you. Would you pray with the needy and tempted if you had eminent gifts of prayer? Use the gifts that you have. Do not measure yourself according to the pattern of somebody else. Do not say to yourself. "If I had his skill," or, "If I had his experience." Take your own skill and your own experience, and make the most of them. Do you stand over against trouble and suffering, and marvel that men whom God hath blessed with such means do so little? Do you say to yourself, "If I had money, I know what I would do with it"? No, you do not. God does; and so he does not trust you with it. "If I had something different from what I have, I would

work," says many a man. No; if you would work in other circumstances, you would work just where you are. A man that will not work just where he is, with just what he has, and for the love of God, and for the love of man, will not work anywhere, in such a way as to make his work valuable. It will be adulterated work. What if you have not money? If you have a heart to work, it is better than if you had great riches. Men need sympathy and brotherhood as much as they need the loaf. It may be that you cannot teach as you would; nevertheless, you can teach. And if you are only willing to do the least things now, by and by you may do better. But whether you do better or not, it is your business to do that which it is in your power to do. You are to do what you can, whether it be more or less; whether it be great or little; whether it be conspicuous or inconspicuous and humble. And if you find that you are hesitant, reluctant, and are acting accordingly, be sure that you do not belong to the widow's school. Did she say to herself, as she handled her fractions of a penny, "What is the use of my throwing these in? They will scarcely be taken out. They are all that I have, with which to buy my day's food. There it will do very little good; here it will do a great deal of good. It is my duty to take care of myself. I am bound to feed my body"? Nothing of the sort. But ah! what a heart she had! She would rather serve her heart, and go that day without necessary food, that she might feel, "I too stand among my people, and I help to support this temple, and I praise my God by my benefaction." The privilege of throwing into the treasury the tenth part of a penny made music in her heart, if it made music nowhere else. And God heard it, and accepted it, and blessed it to all eternity.

Do not then go about saying, "Where shall I bestow my talents? Where shall I settle myself?" I have seen teachers and preachers whose distress of mind seemed to be that they were endowed with a royalty of talents which made it very difficult for them to know where to go. They were like big men-of-war that do not dare to go into shallow channels for fear of running aground. I have known men who spent the best part of their lives in looking about to see where they might bestow themselves with their magnificent talents. And, on the other hand, I have known little uncomely men like Paul—who was probably one of the most insignificant blear-eyed looking men of his generation—who never thought about where they should bestow themselves, who took no great account of their talents, but who had warm hearts which interpreted their worth, and who were morning and evening by the road-side, or in the car, or in the cottage of the poor, or in the resplendent mansion of the rich man,

and who, wherever they were, were opening the fountain of true and divine benevolence. They were continually doing the thing next to them that needed to be done, and they had no time for anxiety as to where they should bestow themselves. They were benefactors, and they devoted themselves to doing good.

Do not be too ambitious. Be more zealous than ambitious. Do not calculate; though you should have discrimination and good sense. (Still, that is a thing which God gives to men; and if he does not give it to them they never can get it.) Work, not so much by the engineer's rule, or the arithmetician's calculations, as by the impulses of a heart that would praise God everywhere. And so your life shall not be void or empty. You cannot make a heart empty and profitless that is full of throbbing sympathy. There are men who scatter good wherever they are. Some of it is recognized, and some of it is not; but they go on scattering it just as much as though it were all recognized.

I do not think that flowers know how much the dews bless them; but the dews do bless them immeasurably. In heaven you will find out how much good you have accomplished—and I pity the man who can estimate in this life all the good he has done. He must be living a starveling, poverty-stricken life. But blessed is the man the result of whose good deeds will be disclosed to him in the other life in greater measure than in this!

If men are working by unconscious ways; if the shadow of one passing-by is sufficient to cure the sick; if the touch of garments carries healing in it; if the effects produced by a heart overflowing with love are such as I have described, how many men will by and by rise up into stature! And how many, alas! will sink down out of stature!

God's work, which is growing, building up, in the world, is not done mostly by those who are most in men's mouths or eyes. Without undervaluing the more obvious institutions—schools and churches; without undervaluing books and ordinances; while I esteem as highly as any man can these outward instrumentalities, I more highly esteem those silent, invisible influences which are at work among men for their amelioration and elevation. I do not think I do a thousandth part as much good here by my ministrations as is done by the obscure fidelities of the poor people who go to their houses and live the religion which I only preach. Ah! it is the unobtrusive piety, it is the quiet painstaking, it is the suffering for another amidst poverty and amidst discouragements, it is the unimpeached fidelity which, though spit upon, and beaten, and neglected, and abused, still carries love in the midst of vice and squalor—it is these things that

are Christ made manifest in this world—the Christ of poor men; the Christ of suffering and bleeding hearts; the Christ of self-denial. For the cross is not abolished. Thousands yet go bearing the cross, following Christ. And while I would not undervalue the outward presentations of truth; while I would not diminish the churches that exist, I would exalt these more silent and obscure virtues, and say, "After all, there is the marrow; there is the power of God in this world." It resides in the almost hidden examples of true Christian living. There is many a tear that plashes on the floor which outdoes in power the rounded sentences of the most resplendent orator. There is many a simple act of standing still and waiting on God which is more potent than the stateliest thing which is done by the hand of art. The history of this world is not to be written on marble, or wood, or stone, or gold. The history of this world is going on in the heart in obscurity. The meekness, the patience, the gentleness, the forbearance, the sweet forgiveness, the spirit which says, "Try again!" the undisclosed endeavor—these things, continued for days and weeks and months and years, through good report and through bad report; the following after Christ in one's self, in one's fellows, in the poor and unfortunate, in those that have no parents, in those that are tempted by poverty where the very crust is divided—these are the things by which great histories are being written. Ah! God dips the pen of the recording angel very near to the mud-puddle. God selects the white linen of many a saint very near to rags. God selects the gold out of which he will build the pavement of the hereafter very near to the filth and the dirt of this world. Our open life will take care of itself. In our obscure, secret life —there is where we need more faith; more fidelity; more of the true Christian fruit.

There is in this view a very searching criticism for every one to apply to himself, in respect to the increase of his usefulness for Christ.

Judging this woman by moral proportions, *she did what she could.* It is said, in another place, of her that broke the alabaster box on Christ's head, "She hath wrought a good work." Here it is said, "She hath given all her living." And this woman who gave a fraction of a penny, gave more, according to the doctrine of moral proportions, than they who gave gold and precious stones.

Now, how many who, as they begin life, in their youth, are generous, and give according to their means, as they grow stronger, and acquire more property, and become more learned, become less generous! How many, as they become more skillful and refined, grow more fastidious! How many, as they become more capable of throw-

ing light on persons, shield that light for their own enlightenment in their own dwelling! How many, as they become more endowed, so that they might become benefactors to those below them, gather about themselves their sweet companions, and go in chanting robes to sing charming music for themselves! When they were poor they were generous, but as their means increased, no proportion was kept between what they received and what they gave. If at the beginning they would give one-tenth of their regular income, at the end they would not give a thousandth part of that income. Men, as they grow strong, and rich, and learned, and refined, seldom keep up that proportion between what they do and what they can do with which they started in life. It is a sad and sorrowful fact which statistics will bear out, that when we begin Christian life, and are learners, we come more nearly to working in proportion to what we have than when we have completed the circle of our education, and come to the other side. Few men at the last part of life work at all nearly up to the measure of what they have. And so it is that we see the spectacle of men who step aside and let others come in, just at that period when they themselves are best fitted to lift, as Samson lifted; when they are best fitted to contend, as the noblest warriors contend, against the evils of life; when they are the best fitted to rear the most magnificent moral structures; when they are the most fully equipped with experiences, and the most completely endowed with materials for working.

But, not to draw this thought unduly out, I remark that there is great cheer in the incident which is the theme of our discourse this morning, to those who are under circumstances of great discouragement and despondency. I love to bring up such examples from the history of our Master, to encourage those who need encouragement. For we grow weary in well-doing, forgetting that "*in due season we shall reap if we faint not.*" There are those who are surrounded by household cares, who are subject to more or less discouragement, who do not know from day to day which way they shall turn. To all such I would say, Be faithful still, whether in sickness or in trouble; bear the yoke; endure hardness in your places as good soldiers. What if you are not known? What if you have not friends? What if you are obscure? What if you have no altar at which to worship? Then worship where you are. Stand where God has put you. Bear, endure, fulfill. No matter if there is no window through which men can look into your life. There is One that sees you. God's eye is on you at morning, and at evening, and through the whole day. The Saviour is present with every father and every mother who are seek-

ing to do their appropriate work faithfully in the household. So be of good cheer.

Do not care what the world says, if Christ praises you. In all kinds of business there are men who are seeking to do their Master's will, finding themselves bruised, their best moral efforts overthrown, and themselves, oftentimes, unsuccessful. They counsel with themselves as to whether they shall still bear witness to integrity; whether they shall not go with the rushing throng and accept custom. But the Saviour says to every man who is seeking to have the spirit of Christ in him, "Carry that Spirit into your affairs. I behold. Endure to the end. I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God, if you hold out to the last."

Do not be discouraged, then. Do not yield the conflict. Stand steadfastly in your place. Still ask for the brightest inspirations. Still attempt to pour from your soul into the affairs and channels where you are, God's truest thoughts and feelings; and the time will come when God will reward you.

And to those who are in schools, and are discouraged with the inaptitude and stupidity and ignorance of scholars; to those teachers who labor with small compensation; to the great army of noble souls who have gone away from the comforts of home, and set themselves down in the twilight of far distant States to carry knowledge to those to whom it was until recently a crime; to those who find themselves shut out from respectability, and from sympathy, and who are obliged to herd with the poor, and make their bed with them—to all such I would say, Be of good cheer. The God of the widow and of the orphan, the God of the poor and the needy, the God of final and quick-coming judgment—he beholds you, and is interested in you, and will multiply to you ten thousand fold for every sorrow or joy in over-measure. "In patience possess ye your souls"; do in obscurity the thing that is true, and right, and noble; and wait for God.

And to all those who are preaching in discouragement in the midst of superstitions, and in rude neighborhoods are seeking to build foundations whose superstructure they never expect to see—to them I would say, Dear friends of Christ, be ye not discouraged. "In due season ye shall reap if ye faint not." The time is short. The work is great. God needs just such men as are willing to work without witness, and without earthly reward. Speak with a homely tongue, if God has given you no better. Speak from house to house, if it be not yours to stand on the platform and command an audience. If you cannot do the things which you do as you fain would do them, and as others expect you to do them, do them as best you can; and remember that it is the heart that measures the deed, and gives it its

value. And the time is not far distant when the God of the poor widow will call you from your labor, and own you in the presence of his angels. Then you will be measured, not by the eloquent tongue, not by the ready hand, not by the skillful finger, but by the love, the fidelity, and earnest sincerity, which there was in your soul, which inspired your labor, and which kept you faithful to the very end.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, O Lord our God! instructed in thy love through Jesus Christ our Saviour. We rejoice that thou dost not meet us with force, nor with penalty; that thou dost not measure with justice and with equity; for none of us could stand in thy presence. There is no part of our nature with which we have not sinned. There is no part of the law that hath touched us that we have not broken. We have sinned for years, hardening our hearts until they are perverse and turned out of the way. And we rejoice that thou hast recreated in us newness of life, through Jesus our Lord, and taught us to come to thee reverently, in the spirit of filial fear, but more in the spirit of confidence and love. We rejoice that thou hast unveiled thyself to us as nature does not. We behold thee and thy laws full of good fruit to the obedient, and full of penalty to the transgressor. And where in all the realm without dost thou declare thyself to be with the penitent, and with the lowly, and with the weak, and with the needy, and with the guilty? Verily thou hast spoken to us by the voice of thy Son—by our Saviour. Thou hast taught us that thou art dealing with us even as parents deal with their children; that thou dost not spare thyself, didst not spare thyself, wilt not spare thyself; that thou dost give time, and thought, and care, and suffering itself, that thou mayest bring forth unto purity those that are gone astray. Thou art seeking the dark, to give them light. Thou art calling, with all the voice of thy providence, to those who are pursuing evil ways, to turn again upon their path, and to come unto thee. Thou art helping them. Words of warning thou dost throw down before them, and words of encouragement behind them, that they may be drawn from the evil that threatens them, and brought back to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.

Now, O Lord our God! we desire to come to thee in the blessed name of Christ Jesus. We desire to come with all the encouragement, with all the hope, and with all the assurance which is in him. May his promises cover us. May all the sweet words of cheer which have sustained so many thousands in the deepest of the battle of life, sustain us. May those truths which have been the armor of God to so many, clothe us. Grant that we, as good soldiers in this great warfare, clothed with the whole panoply of God, may stand, and having done all, still stand. Grant, we beseech of thee, that we may, this day, draw very near to thee in hope, very near in love, very near in the spirit of appropriating faith. May we be able to take something from thy truth home to ourselves. May we be able this day to feel that God hath entered into the secret experience of our souls; that he hath shined blessings upon us; that the altar hath given something to the soul.

And grant, we pray thee, thy blessing especially to rest upon all those that have gathered this morning, desiring to make their petitions known unto thee. May their hearts be vocal unto thee. Wilt thou listen to every one, and accept the confession, or thanksgiving, or aspiration of every one.

Grant that thy blessing may be meted out to every household, as their circumstances may require. Be with those who are rescued from sickness, and who have come hither to-day rejoicing once more in the privileges of the sanctuary. Be near to those who have occasion for thanksgiving in that their prayers are answered because their dearly beloved have been spared to them. Remember those, we beseech of thee, who desire to be here to-day, but who are kept away by sickness in their households. Wilt thou command that the angel of health may spread his wings over those households and heal them. Visit those households where there is sorrow and great distress, to-day. And be near to any that are going down the valley, and are not far from the gate. And though it seem to them dark, may they feel that beyond all there is light; that there is a land without a sun and without night.

And we pray that thou wilt grant that all those upon whom thou art laying burdens may have strength to-day; that they may have access to thee. Wilt thou be pleased to put thine arm beneath them, and lift them up.

Be near to any who are in perplexity, and who know not what way to go, and are lost as they that are in the wilderness. Be their guide out of all their perplexity. And may they stand in the strength of the Lord. And when they shall again have established their goings, may they stand with gratitude and with life-long service in thy sanctuary.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon all parents, and on all those who are in trouble for their children. And hear, O Lord, the prayers of children who desire the blessing of Almighty God to rest upon their parents. Be with those who are separated from friends; who are upon the sea; who are doing business upon the great waters. Be with those who are far away in distant lands. Lord, how near they are to thee, though they are so far in seeming from us! Grant that our thoughts, as they go out to-day, may bear with them thy blessing every whither. We pray for those who are not favored as we are with the light of the Gospel; for those who sit in strange places to-day, and are heartsick in remembering past privileges that have long since ceased to them.

Be with those who have gone forth to preach the Gospel of Christ among the humble and the poor. Be with those whom no man cares for. Be with those who are suffering the privations of a life upon our frontier. May all those who seek to benefit others, find themselves strengthened of God. O! that the Gospel which is preached to-day might be one of wisdom and power from on high. And everywhere may thy people be comforted and strengthened. And grant that thy kingdom may come everywhere throughout the world.

We pray for the advance of civilization; for the purification of morals; for the melioration of manners; for concord among the people. We pray that the oppression of the weak may cease, and that the hearts of the strong may grow more Christ-like. We pray for the diffusion of that knowledge which shall drive superstition out of every religion. And we pray for those among whom there is no religion. We pray for the elevation of thy Churches. And grant, O Lord! that at last the time may come when all the fierceness of the beast shall depart from out of man, and wars shall cease, and cruelties shall cease, and all the world shall be governed by justice, by love, by truth, and by fidelity.

And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit shall be praises for evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the words of exhortation. May all of us be aroused to think more nearly as thou thinkest, and to feel more nearly as thou dost feel. Bring us up out of the dark, out of the blearing light of this world—its bad examples, its selfishness, and its ambitions. Inspire us with something of thine own life. Teach us to be humble as thou wert, and meek as thou wert. May we learn of thee. And in thy meekness and humility may we have something of thy rest, and of thy peace. O! that we might look forward more to the coming day, and live as seeing that which is invisible. Bless all that labor, and all that suffer, in their various circumstances. Purify their motives. Inspire their hearts. Lift us all higher toward the heavenly land. And bring us, at the last, to behold it with unveiled face, and to see thee as thou art. And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit shall be the praise, forevermore. *Amen.*

A PLEA FOR GOOD WORKS.

"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."

"And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful."—TITUS iii., 8, 14.

In the epistle of Paul to Titus, and in his two epistles to Timothy, we have not only the general expression of his teaching, but an indication of his idea of the mode in which a minister should administer the truth—of the subjects that he should discuss, and of the methods by which he should present the truth in connection with those subjects. There is therefore in these epistles a practical element which we scarcely shall find in any other of the apostle's writings. For when he teaches teachers how to teach, he gives a certain insight which he would not if he were teaching the congregation itself.

We find that when the apostle is writing to teachers, he puts great emphasis on the subject of *Good Works*. We find more said about good works in the New Testament than we hear said about them in the pulpit. I see, on every side, men afraid to teach morality, as being too superficial and too shallow. And others are afraid to preach too much good works because it will lead men away from the doctrine of "justification by faith." And others are afraid to teach good works because it will lead men to build their foundations not solid enough nor deep enough. But I hear the apostle saying to those who are ordained as teachers and overseers:

"I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men. Let ours [that is, our disciples] learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful."

This is not an accidental passage. If you turn to the first epistle to Timothy, aside from scattered passages all through the epistle, you find one in the fifth chapter, where the apostle, speaking of what a deaconness' qualifications ought to be, says,

"Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work."

SUNDAY MORNING, Jan. 29, 1871. LESSON: ROM. XII. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 104, 173, 622.

That shows the kind of good works that is meant. Working kindness and beneficence and equity in every direction—that is the good works which the apostle sought to inculcate.

Then we find in the sixth chapter of this same epistle, the injunction,

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

This does not mean that good works have a meritorious element in them, though it looks very much as if it did mean so.

So in the 2d of Timothy the apostle gives his idea comprehensively of what the benefit of the whole Scripture is:

"Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine [that is to say, for teaching: it is the basis of teaching], for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

That is the drift of the whole of it. There is hardly a letter of Paul that does not put emphasis upon good works. Nor are we left in doubt of what he means by the term. As interpreted by the apostle, or as the term is used by the apostle, *good works* signifies, to give it a modern phraseology, *right feelings breaking out into right actions.* Good works are the outward expression of good feelings, whatever may be that expression. They are those means by which a thought or a feeling of truth, of equity, or of kindness, in us, takes on an outward form, so that it may do something for us. Such are the good works that the apostle meant. And of course you cannot classify them. They are endless. They are almost as various as the possibilities of combination in thought and feeling. They are evidently discriminated from mere feeling; that is, they are called "the fruit of the Spirit," "goodliness," etc. When the apostle designs to speak of interior states—love, joy, peace, hope, faith—he has particular terminology for them. When he wishes to speak of what the results of these states is in outward life, then he calls them "good works." So that these are the right affections of a man's nature taking on an outward expression. And that answers to the apostolic injunction that we are to be *rich in good works.*

Hence, there is not simply a continual specification throughout the whole drift of the New Testament, of the general productiveness of Christian life, but there is a special delineation of the duties which flow from men's relations to each other.

You shall find the New Testament giving hints to magistrates of their duties, to subjects of their duties, to masters of what good

works are to them, to slaves of what is expected of them, to husbands, to wives, to children, to the rich, to the poor, to strangers, to persons in sorrow, to persons in joy. Almost every civil or social situation, almost every condition in life, has some point or other instanced and drawn out as a specimen of what right action is to be in men if they are acting Christianly.

And this always made it seem very strange to me that people objected to preaching anything but what they call "the Gospel." For you recollect the time when if a man stepped out of the old doctrinal ring, and preached anything practical, everybody shut him up again, and said, "Go back and preach the Gospel"! And by *the Gospel* they meant those dead and alive intellectual statements that had no particular relation to vital feelings, or motive, or conduct—especially conduct in public affairs. But when you come to read the apostle's letters, you will find that they are full of allusions to practical life—to store life, to business life, to magisterial life, to the life of the king and of the subject, to the life of the citizen under all circumstances. All the relations of social life are brought out into view, and the Gospel is applied especially to them.

Now, I do not think that the preaching of the evangelical churches, even yet, attaches the same importance to good works that is given to them in the New Testament; and there are, and have been, not a few causes which have conspired to make us barren in that direction.

1. There is in Scripture itself a caution on the subject of good works. Men are dissuaded from trusting in them. And there is language which to those who read it incautiously and superficially seems to state that good works are of no value. But then, they are not the good works which we have been speaking of. There was a set of legal routine observances which went by the name of *works*. Generally these were called *works of righteousness;* or, more frequently, *works of the law*. And the impression of the old Jew was that although it would be better to have right affections, nevertheless one fulfilled every point and particular of the law by punctilious or outward performance. That he thought would be taken in lieu of every thing else. He made right living to consist in mere externality: not in character, not in disposition, not in motive; but simply in ritualistic performance. That was a corrupt, degenerate form of belief which existed in the time of Christ and the apostles; and against this Paul argued vehemently. In reference to this, he said that works were nothing; that they had no validity before God; that there was no reliance to be placed upon them; that one was as safe without them as with them; that if a man wanted them he was at liberty

to take them, and if he chose to leave them off he was at liberty to do that; that they were not to be trusted in; that they were without meritoriousness; that instrumentally they were good for what they did, and not a whit more. But this denunciation of good works as a ground of merit from the Jewish point of view, has been confounded with the exhortation to good works in the sense in which we have explained them; namely, as the outward expression of benevolent feelings.

2. Another influence which has dissuaded ministers from preaching God's good works has been the Catholic doctrine of good works as having an atoning virtue, which originally sprung up under the old Pharisaic doctrine, and was the outgrowth of it.

When the reformers emancipated the truth, they found men performing useless and senseless things innumerable,—superstitiously, vaguely believing that there was merit, and a certain moral purchasing power in given lines of conduct. Thus, when men gave gifts or performed charities, that was to be set down to them as a positive gain—as so much over against wrong-doing. For, so ignorant were men then (and they still are not much better enlightened), that they supposed the transactions of a man's heart could be likened to the transactions of a man's store; and that in matters of good and evil an account could be kept of debit and credit, one over against the other. It was taught that if a man performed good deeds they were of various values. For so many prayers, so many alms, so many dollars, so much value in gifts, there was set down to their credit so much. If they performed penances, and endured mortifications, these inured to their benefit so and so. If they performed pilgrimages and fastings, these wrought so much for them. If they repeated the *Credo*, the *Ave*, or the *Pater Noster*, that availed them so much.

Now, I am not one of those who say that repeating the sacred Creed, or performing pilgrimages, and fastings, and penances, and mortifications, or bestowing gifts and charities, is all useless. On the contrary, if I see a man who by repeating his *Credo*, or his *Ave*, or his *Pater Noster* is made more devout, I say, "That does him good in the proportion in which it makes him more devout." If a proud man performs penances and mortifications, and it humbles him, I say, "It does him good so far as it humbles him." These things are instruments; and if they work out any good in a man, they are valuable for just that, but for nothing else. They are schoolmasters; and they are good if they teach man, who is their pupil. But in the time of the reformers it was thought that there was intrinsic merit in them, independent of what they did for a

man; and the church was found swarming with false notions of good works—with ecclesiastical impositions that went by the name of *good works*. And these reformers lifted up their voices, and said, "It is the heart that avails. It is the disposition before God that is taken into account. If a man is just, and pure, and true, and penitent, and humble, and loving, God accepts him on account of the moral nature which he finds or plants in him, and not on account of the external works which he performs." And so they denounced works, and said, "Ye are justified by faith"—that is, "Ye are to be saved by faith." There was a Catholic doctrine of justification by faith; but it was not one which would meet our modern needs. As I understand it, a man is justified before God on this ground,—that God's heart and disposition is such that they have in them healing power, so that when man's nature is brought into willing, voluntary, and continuous sympathy with them, they cleanse him. The divine nature cleanses ours. We are justified by our faith—that faith which brings us into commerce with God. We are purified, and cleansed, and ennobled by contact with divinity. That is justification by faith. And while the Roman priest was saying, "Ye are justified by your meritorious works: give, give, give; do, do, do," the reformer came, saying, "Ye are justified by no outward works: ye are justified by the merit and inward virtue of the heart of God." And the reformer was right. And in that Catholic sense good works were invalid and useless.

But such was the horror of everything Roman Catholic, that the prejudice against good works has come down to our time, and does not stop to discriminate as to what sort of works are meant. Every thing called *good works* is messed in a common lump, and is supposed to be uncongenial to the truth, and disallowed by the word of God.

3. Still another cause of reluctance there was, which discouraged much discourse on the subject of good works; namely, a very laudable desire, even when not symmetrical in knowledge, to counteract the shallow notions prevalent in society, as to the sufficiency of morality instead of true religion. For men have held substantially that if one obeys the laws of his land, and obeys the ordinary maxims of morality in his neighborhood, although that might not be very much, yet it was sufficient; that God would accept that in lieu of anything further—in lieu of any mysterious change. So the most superficial notion of morality—that of paying debts, of paying taxes, of maintaining outward proprieties—was made to be the basis of character. It was a miserable idea of character which prevailed. It had no inspiration in it, and never could have. It kept

men at a low point of development. And so it was false and unbecoming at every point.

Even the philosophers' idea of manhood left out the whole question of the state of the heart. It left out the whole moral question of man's life. It would permit pride and selfishness. It would permit envy, and jealousy, and even malice. It would permit all that goes to degrade a man inwardly, provided that outwardly he maintained an ordinary degree of morality.

As against this, men have preached that the outward life was not enough; that there must be something more than morality, as collateral to or independent of some other thing; that character must be higher and nobler than any external elements can make it; that there must be some deeper views, and therefore views more full of inward and spiritual life, prevailing. In communities where morality had depressed the religious notions of the community, and false and superficial morality had gained a footing, there sprung up preachers who gave the most intense and continuous views of the need of an inward life, and perhaps leaned to the other extreme.

4. One other influence I will mention, which has acted very strongly; namely, the tendency of men who reject the so-called evangelical scheme of doctrine, and substitute, (and with not much strength,) refinement, sentiment, taste, imagination, beauty, for what are called *strong doctrines*. This has set a large part of the pulpit very much against the preaching of good works. For it is true that a large class of thoughtful and excellent men—men excellent in themselves—fell off from what was considered the hard, evangelical, intellectual dogmas; and it is true that instead of raising up a superstructure of strong intellectual views, they rather fell into a strain of sentimentalism. And I think it is true that their preaching became, on the whole, feeble. Though at times it was full of sentiment and beauty, and always illumined by good taste, yet, after all, it lacked growth, and lost power. The preaching of mere sentiment will perhaps comfort those who already are refined; it will perhaps polish enamel that is already smooth; but such preaching never did, and I think never will, get hold of the community much. There is nothing in refinement and taste and good neighborhood that, being alone preached, or mainly preached, gets any hold upon the conscience, or gets any hold upon fear, or produces much reformation among wicked men. On the contrary, these things being preached exclusively, gradually deliquesce and run out. There is no power in them. There is no growth to them.

Thus, where the preaching of morality sprang up in modern times, it so happened that it sprang up in the hands of men who re-

jected, or at any rate neglected, the great outline truths of Christianity; and a certain contempt was therefore felt for it when it was preached by such persons.

All these reasons, you see, are quite aside from the truth itself; quite aside from any philosophic and interior reasons. They are external reasons founded on actions and reactions which have dissuaded men from preaching as much about good works as the Bible itself does.

There has sprung up, practically, indeed, in the evangelical churches, a high estimate of the moralities of life, and of good deeds in life. Doctrinally, however, they have been very little insisted upon. It has been taught, indeed, that if men were well rooted in doctrine, or doctrines, this would tend to produce good works; and that the most complete and summary method of reaching good works was to imbue men with doctrines of grace, so that when profoundly moved they would give forth those doctrines to the world. And there was some truth in it. For morality, according to high definition, is grace working out into a noble life-form. And yet, in many instances, and sometimes in whole denominations, dry doctrinal discussions have gone on until, little by little, the civilities of life, the thousand courtesies of life, all the moralities of life, have been undervalued; have been put into a separate classification of what are called "natural virtues." So that there were *gracious* states, and *natural* states; and the natural states were supposed to have no theological virtue in them.

I remember very well, in my youth, when the discussion waxed high between my father and me, turning on some such question as this: A man is walking by the side of the river. He hears some one cry out. It is a stranger. The river is full of floating ice. The man, moved by the impulse of generosity, springs from his horse, and plunges in. He struggles to save the drowning man at the peril of his own life, and will not give him up, and at last succeeds in bringing him to shore. And not content with simply saving his life, he takes him home, and administers to his wants, and sees that he is made dry and warm and comfortable. "Now," said I, "father, was it a good or a bad act in that man to risk his own life to rescue a fellow man from drowning? Was it acceptable to God, or was it not?" "There was no virtue in it," said father; "it was a mere nat'ral impulse—a mere nat'ral impulse." "Well," said I, "suppose such nat'ral impulses were spread all through a man, what would be the difference between nat'ral impulses and grace?"

There prevailed, arising from this classification, the notion that a man should perform the lines of conduct which sprang from direct

theological doctrine. Those, it was thought, would be gracious actions, and actions acceptable before God. But all those spontaneous good feelings that a man observes—all generosities, all kindnesses, all obliging dispositions, all tenderness, all sympathy, all equity, all truth, all magnanimity, such as we see irradiating life, such as smooth and enrich it—these, it was thought, are not bad (it never was taught that they were bad); but they have nothing of piety in them, they have not the peculiar quality which comes from the regenerating process, it was said.

Now, I affirm that they have. I affirm that they are right in so far as they are good. It is not a question of whether they amount to this,—that they are a satisfaction for wrong-doing. They are not. It is a question of whether a man may not do a great many incidental good things, and yet the great current of his life be proud and selfish. He may. It is a question of whether a man may not be a proud man, an avaricious man, a base man, a very worldly man, and yet have loop-holes of experience through which will shine much that is good and noble and true. It is a question of whether a man may not have actions cropping out here and there which are not in accordance with the general drift of his life.

Here is a man the button of whose pocket is as strong as decrees; and nothing can tear it open. He goes on from day to day seeing want on every side, and steeling his heart against it, and holding himself aloof from it. And yet, there comes an accidental day on which that button gives way, and the pocket flies open, and out comes his hand, doing a real good deed, which saves a man. Now, was not that a good deed? What if it was done by a man who was stingy yesterday, and that will make up for his generosity to-day by fleecing the first man that he makes a bargain with to-morrow, was not that a good thing for him to do? It was. And he ought to repeat it again and again and again, till it is the rule, and not the exception, in his conduct. The trouble is, not that we have too much of good works in life, but that we have too little of them. What is needed is, that they shall enter into the nature of character, and become habit. They are in and of themselves right. You cannot express a true word, you cannot perform a generous action, you cannot show a magnanimity, you cannot do a kind thing in the world, that God does not look upon it and say, "It is good."

But still, do not say that your character is good because you have accidentally performed one good deed.

Among the marksmen standing thick around, there comes a stranger who is bantered to make a trial of the rifle; and taking aim, and drawing the trigger, the first shot strikes the bull's-eye. But he will

not shoot again. He might shoot fifty times and not hit the mark. And that one lucky shot does not make him a skillful marksman, does it?

If, then, a man does a good act, it *is* a good act, even though his character is not good. He may not be, in general, a good man; but that particular thing is good. And the reason why he is not a good man is, that there is no continuity to his good deeds; there is no motive-power inside of his disposition to make it continuous. What we mean by good men is, not men who now and then do a good act, but men who join one good act to another. It is men the whole tendency of whose life is the production of good things, kind things, right things.

And the reason why I say that a moralist is in a dangerous state, is not in a salvable condition, is, not that single things are not right and good, but that single things do not make character; that single things do not make disposition; and that it is character and disposition that make manhood. And if in the general tenor of a man's life he is selfish, and proud, and sordid, and worldly, he is selfish and proud and sordid and worldly in spite of any incidental good things that he may do.

All feelings, I remark, first, social and moral, tend to some expression in conduct. Men are benefited if their feelings have this expression allowed them. Unfruitful emotion is to be suspected. Where unfruitful emotion is continuous, we may be sure that it performs nothing. Feeling acts as an impulse, as a spur, as a spring. It is that which puts a man forward in a certain course. And when feelings are excited, and they put nothing forward, they are sometimes even dangerous to a man. Even if they be not dangerous, they are incomplete, as emotions. For a perfect feeling is one which, rising from normal persuasion, eventuates in some form of action; in some form of incarnation; in some deed performed. Even if they are not spurious, unfruitful feelings are likely to become morbid, irregular, mischievous. Action is the right outlet of emotion.

The law of self-culture, therefore, requires good works, as the very way of having good feelings. I do not believe that a man can ever have good feelings which do him good permanently, unless they are feelings which take on some outward shape.

Now and then you go to meeting. You feel good all day Sunday; you feel happy; you feel like singing. But you do not pluck up one single fault by the roots. You do not weed out one wrong tendency. You do not act any more divinely toward man, woman, or child. You do not change your business. You do not illuminate

one dark place. You go to church; and what with singing and preaching and fellowship of society, you feel, as you say, *greatly refreshed;* you feel *greatly comforted and lifted up.* Having gone to church in the morning, you go again in the evening, and get a surfeit of feeling. And you go on Friday night again. And you would go on Wednesday night again. And you would go on Monday and Tuesday nights. Now what is the result, but that there is a constant excitation of feeling? And it is right feeling. It is devout feeling; it is friendly feeling; it is social feeling; and in its nature it is all right enough. But this is the point: it is the most dangerous thing a person can do to have a continuous flow of feeling that does not expend itself in some form of action. It produces morbidity, unfruitfulness of feeling, irregularity of feeling.

Therefore, in proportion as men go to meeting, they must be saints out of meeting. It will not do to be saints in meeting and sinners everywhere else. If you go where your feelings are kindled, where your emotions are raised to an ecstatic condition, you are in a dangerous situation. That is a state in which persons are liable to fall into a kind of crystaline mood, in which there is an immense deal of self-deception. And from this you will understand the difference between religion and religiousness, or religiosity. There is nothing more dangerous than intensity of feeling, and paucity of conduct as the result of that feeling; and just in proportion to the moral emotion excited, must be the moral conduct flowing therefrom. Every feeling ought to ultimate in some action, or course of action. We are to change, we are to incarnate these emotional states into physical triumphs, or they will not be wholesome.

I think there is a great deal too much going to meeting, therefore. If we could distribute going to church so that those who do not go at all should go some, and so that those that go too much should go less, and act more; if we could make a general average so that everybody should go as often as would be profitable, it would be far better than it is now. And if those who feel a great deal, felt less and did more, seeing to it that every feeling, like a flail, should come down and bring out some wheat on the great threshing floor of life, we all should be more benefited. Let good works spring from good feelings; and be alarmed when you have a great deal of good feeling and but little of good works.

Good works, I remark secondly, as the proper exponent of good feelings, are the most powerful persuasion to faith and to religion. There are a thousand who can understand a good action where there is one who can understand an abstract doctrine.

Now, I am far from saying that religion is not to have its philosophy, and that philosophy is not to be preached; but I affirm that while to indoctrinate a congregation in philosophy is important, it is not so important as to indoctrinate that congregation in the practicalness of good living. And if in preaching there was a larger interpretation of men's nature to themselves; if their faculties were better delineated to them; if the temptations to which they are liable were oftener pointed out to them, and the mode of fortifying themselves against those temptations were made more plain to them; if the exigencies into which their feelings are sure to be brought were more fully explained to them, and the ways of extricating themselves therefrom were more faithfully expounded to them, I think the results throughout the community would be much more satisfactory than those which flow from what is called *theological instruction.*

As I have said, doctrinal preaching does not influence men so strongly as the sight of good actions. A good doctrine will excite a man's judgment, and take hold of his conscience; but there is something more powerful than a good doctrine. It is a *good life.* Christ understood that, in theory and in practice. He healed, and then taught. He fed before he preached. He acted first, and then he instructed. More than that, he laid down this maxim of conduct:

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

It was a sight of men's kindness, and generosity, and justice, and patience, and fortitude that was to teach the Gospel to primitive ages. It was that which made it a power of life among God's children. Examples of this thing are constantly before us. Everybody has his *bete noir;* and Christians have theirs. We are brought up to hate the devil; and *devil* is the name for whatever we do hate. And while we have our little devils at home, and in business, and in the street, and elsewhere, we have also our little Christian devils; and those are other denominations. We are always taught, therefore, first to love our church, secondly to love God, and thirdly to hate all other churches. I do not say that that is the actual creed; but I say that to a large extent it is the way things go. People express themselves strongly. They thank God that they were *born in this church.* They thank God that they were *always brought up in this church.* And, on the other hand, they express themselves not so complimentary in regard to other churches.

For instance, there are a great many who do not think any better of the Quakers than they ought to think; who call them "idealists," "dreamers," "visionists," and say that there is nothing to them;

who employ all sorts of disparaging phrases in speaking of them. Then there are a great many who do not believe in Unitarians and Universalists, nor in their belief. And then there are a great many who have a most salutary and edifying horror of the Roman Catholics. And then there are a great many who think that High Calvinists—the old, stern, blue-jacket Calvinists—are intolerable. Oh! they can scarcely suppress the horror which they have of them. So things are parceled out; and everybody has some religion that he hates.

Now, perhaps, a man brought up in that spirit drifts out into life. He has come to feel that there is nothing like being a good Presbyterian, as his father was before him. He goes into the church; and he has an idea that he may be an elder before he dies. He has heard a great deal about Quakers; but he has had no opinion of them at all. He goes into the war, and is made sick by exposure; and finally, when he is helpless, and has no one to care for him, he is found by some Quakers, and taken into their little community, and nursed and nourished with great simplicity and great gentleness. He sees no ostentation among them, but great truthfulness, and unbounded patience of love. As soon as he is able to go about, he vists one house and another, and finds them everywhere the same. No effort is made to proselyte him. No controversy is gotten up to convince him that he is wrong and that they are right. But he sees how they live; how devout they are; how pure-minded they are; how serene they are; how truly spiritual they are. And by the time he gets well, and goes back to his father's house, his feelings are so changed that it will not do for anybody to rail against the Quakers in his presence. Although he was brought up to think the least of them, yet, after being among them, and seeing their good works, he glorifies his Father which is in heaven, from the light of their example and piety.

What has taken place? Has he read Fox's works? Has he studied and acquainted himself with the Quaker system of philosophy? Nothing of the sort. But he has observed their life; and he says, "Those people are Christians, or else there are not any Christians."

Another man has been brought up so that he is tremendously orthodox. He would no more go into a Unitarian church than he would go into a theater. He feels about that very much as many people feel about coming to Plymouth Church! But in the course of providence he is thrown into a Unitarian family. He is a very severe man in his disposition, and he finds himself met by people of the most singular sweetness—people that are utterly unfierce; and he feels rebuked in their presence. Some day he utters such speeches

that the very children look at him with horror; and he finds himself a publican and a heathen in this Unitarian family. And his ideas begin to change. After he has been with them a month, he finds great want of moral tone in himself. He is very orthodox. His doctrines come together like irons in a machine; and men are ground to powder by controversy who get into his mill. But when he sees how these people manage their temper and feelings; when he beholds their forbearance, and generosity, and gentleness, and kindness, he cannot resist his convictions any longer, and he says, "I do not know how to account for it; but one thing I do believe, that somehow or other such Unitarians will be saved." He cannot get it through his theology, but he has got it through his heart.

Well, what is it? He has seen good works—*Christian* good works. He has seen real Christian dispositions working themselves out in real Christian actions. And the sight of these is more than controversy or reasoning can be.

Now, if there is anything that we feel free to do, and justified in doing, and expect to be praised for doing, it is reviling the Catholics. We are doubtless all in sympathy here. We do not believe in a Pope, nor in Cardinals, nor in Bishops, nor in Priests, nor in their principles. We are all at unity in this respect. It is not troublesome to get people together in hating. It is only in loving that it is hard to make people one.

So our poor boys felt who went South; and after desperate conflicts, some of them, wounded, and more dead than alive, were taken from the battle-fields to hospitals where they were attended by "Sisters of Charity." Here were these women, acting under the supervision of their priests, performing good works night and day, without weariness, without a self-thought apparently, kind as kindness itself, and giving new light and luster and interpretation to the divine patience, by giving new models of it. And the youth who started for the army a great Protestant, who went into the war feeling that all Catholics would be damned, for a long time resists the influence of the gentleness and kindness which he receives at the hands of these women; but by the time he is well enough to go home, he is ready to fight for that part of the Catholic Church, at least, called "Sisters of Charity."

What has won that boy over to this feeling toward them? They have not read him any argument in favor of their religion. They have not placed in his hand any book setting forth the principles of their faith. They have not shown any improper desire to win him. They have not resorted to any offensive method of producing an impression on his imagination or heart or understanding. But he will

tell you that if there are any Christians in this world, *they* are Christians. What has done it? The sight of their good works has done it.

Here is a stern, granite-faced old Calvinist. All the neighborborhood know how hard he is. The man that stumbles on him shall be broken; and the man on whom he stumbles shall be ground to dust. He is one of the hardest of hard men. Yet, by and by there will come round an exigency in which you will come under the shadow of that man's wing, and he will protect you; and then all those qualities which have seemed so hard to you, will seem as the walls of a house when a storm is raging. The stronger they are, and the harder they are, the better you like it when once you get inside. Only let his feeling come out in the shape of good actions, and you will say, "Oh! after all, when you come to know the man clear down inside, there is a great deal that is good and beautiful in him. Pity that he does not show it more, that other folks might see it." You have found it out inside.

My brethren, you never saw a man that had a feeling or quality of truth, of justice, or of love, and gave expression to it, that the sight of it did not produce the conviction in those that looked upon it that he was a Christian man. You never saw a man living better than you lived, that it was not brought to your mind more powerfully than a sermon could have brought it, "I lack! I lack!" And this is the meaning of the Saviour, when he says:

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

A single thought more. One says, "Suppose I have no right feelings? You say that good works are to flow from right feelings; that right feelings are to be wrought out into right actions; but suppose I have no such feelings, what am I to do? Must I perform the right actions anyhow?" Yes, certainly. Right actions performed without right feelings are imperfect, and are less influential than they would be if they were accompanied by right feelings; yet they have a mission in life, and do an important work when thrown into the mixture of human experience.

As, on the one hand, feeling ought to take on some form of conduct; so, on the other hand, it is a law that conduct tends to work back and produce the feeling from which it ought to spring. Let me illustrate.

If a man feels generously, let him do something generous. Let the emotion be followed by its appropriate action; and the tendency of the action will be to go on and repeat itself. But a person says, "I do not feel generously." Then, I say, perform the action without

the feeling, and the performance will tend to excite the feeling. If you act pityingly, though you do not feel pity, you will find that a tendency to pity will be excited in you. If you act benevolently, you will find that benevolence itself will be quickened in you. If you act justly, conscience will begin to be stirred. The way to educate moral feeling is to iterate and reiterate the effects which that feeling would produce if were excited in the bosom.

So then, if a man says, "I am not a Christian, and I do not feel bound to perform Christian duties," he has an erroneous idea of how to become a Christian. One way is to *begin to act like a Christian.* Thousands there are in this congregation who are standing wistfully hoping that they may ere long be Christians; yea, who mean to enter upon an active Christian life; but who do not feel that they are wound up yet. They are saying in themselves, "My intentions are good; my purpose is right; I mean to enter upon a Christian life, and do my duty as a Christian; but I do not yet see my way clear to begin." My advice to you is, Begin where you are, and do the things which lie next to you that a Christian man should. For that is one of the roads to Christian life. Do not fail to act like a Christian, even if you cannot feel like one. Do not wait for feeling. If you do not feel, then act, that you may feel. Do the things that you would do if you were a Christian. There is nothing that we ought to do as Christians that we ought not to do anyhow. You are bound to fill up your life with a better manhood. This is obligatory on all men and under all circumstances. So, whatever is right and just and proper, that do. Do not wait for any technical experience. Do not wait to be carried by this or that emotion to any particular point. Whatever is true, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good report, do to-day, do at once, and do continuously. And pray God that to these outward actions there may be added the experience of those inward emotions which shall make conduct spontaneous and bountiful.

Not to dwell longer on this subject, though it is full of other applications, I repeat the words with which I began:

"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." "And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Show us that thou dost not shut out from thy thoughts any that thou hast created; that thine eye is open to those that are afar off as well as to those that are near; and that thy heart is toward those that are needy, even though their transgression hath made them needy.

Thou art the God of all help. Thou lovest truth; thou lovest righteousness; and thou hast ordained that they shall stand; and upon them, as upon foundations, thou wilt build thy kingdom, and perfect it to the uttermost. And thou wilt turn out of it whatsoever offends or maketh a lie. Yet in thy great work thou wilt bring forth strength out of weakness, joy out of sorrow, purity out of imperfection. Thou wilt teach men patiently, and with infinite long-suffering. Thou wilt not cast away thine heritage, nor destroy those who have come short of obedience. Thou art a God of mercy; thou art a God of grace and goodness; and it is this goodness of thine that leads to repentance. But for thy patience with us, but for thy paternal forbearance we had despaired long ago, and, with face turned, gone away forever from thee; but thy mercy hath held us; thy goodness hath encouraged us; and we have been the recipients of thy pardon. Thou hast spared in times past, and art still sparing; and we desire to give thanks to thee together, to-day, for all the mercies which we have had; for all the judgments which have been averted; for all the worthy plans which thou hast inspired us to form, and which have come to pass; and for all the escapes which thou hast granted us, delivering us out of snares and troubles. We desire to thank thee for the whole memory of thy grace to us from the time that we were born, through our childhood, and all the way of our life upward. More are the things that are forgotten than are the things that are remembered. More are those things that are unknown and unnoticed than are those that ever come to our knowledge. When the books of God shall be opened to us in the life to come, how wondrous will be that path of providence through which thou wilt have led us, O all-guiding Father! How strange it will be that we have known so little of things which were so eminent, and in which was our very immortality! We rejoice to believe that we are not guided alone by the wisdom which we possess, and that it is not our skill only that is our defense. Higher than our thought move the eternal circuits of thy thought; and wider abroad than our arm is the omnipotence of thine hand; and all around us is God, loving, thinking, guiding, defending. In thee we live, and move, and have our being. And we rejoice that in the plenitude of thy nature is the certitude of our salvation. We are saved, not because we are good, but because thou art good; not because we are perfect, but because thy mercy overflows the bounds and measures of perfection. And thou dost take to the perfection of thine own power the imperfect. And so we have hope of everlasting life.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt accept our thanks for all the sweetness and blessedness which we have had in the knowledge and hope of Jesus Christ. For the fulfillment of his promises which have been to us yea and amen, for all the seasons of prayer which we have enjoyed, for communion one with another, for the blessed fellowship of labor in the vineyard of the Lord, for all the hope and inspiration which we have had, we render thee thanks. It has not been in vain that we have served thee. It has not been in vain that we have been called by name of thee.

And now, we desire to go forward in thy work, and to bear well the yoke and the burden, and to find them, as we have found them, light and easy.

We pray that thou wilt accept, to-day, the offering of thy people, which they bring, of thoughts and feelings, and present before thee. Make thyself known to every one. May each heart that prays to thee hear itself called by name. May its most secret wishes be made known to thee. Or, if the wants of any rise inexplicable and unknown to them, do thou, O God, who seest the secret intents of the heart, discern what each one's need is; and be thou a Saviour according to their needs.

And we pray that thou wilt hear those who express their gladness and their joyfulness in thy presence to-day. Hear those who come hither in fulfillment of vows to-day, and stand among thy people to make mention of thy goodness. And hear those who desire to enter into covenant and promise with thee to-day. And hear, to-day, those that bring with them their sorrow, their trouble; those who ask release; those who request that burdens may be removed; those who entreat thee to grant that they may be delivered from temptation; those who are in the snare, and pray that they may escape as a bird escapes from the net of the fowler.

We pray for those who are troubled in the household, and for their children, and for their companions, and for their friends. O, thou that seest the thoughts of the heart! wilt thou not look upon that which we appear to be one to another, but look inward, and discern the very nature of our influence.

We pray that thou wilt bless us according to the multitude of thy tender mercies; according to the greatness of thy loving-kindness. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless all for whom we should pray. Remember thy servants, everywhere, that to-day preach the gospel of Christ. May they be able to do it with purity, and with directness, and with power from on high. Be with thy servants that are assembled for worship everywhere. May their services be such as shall be acceptable to thee, and such as shall nourish thy people into all true greatness.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon all those, everywhere, to-day, whom our thoughts remember, whether they be upon the sea or on the land, at home or abroad. O Lord! we commit to thee those who are dear to us, and pray for them. And we pray for strangers in our midst, that they may, in the house of God, find their brethren and home.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt fulfill thy promises which have respect to thy Church, and which have respect to the nations of the earth. And let that day so long lingering upon the morning horizon at last break over the hills, and the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his beams. Cast down oppression. Destroy superstition. Purge ignorance out from among the nations of the earth. Lift up the race into civilization, and into purity, and into power. And bring to pass the promises of the latter-day glory.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praises, evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the word of instruction delivered. Grant that we may not be carried away into incorrect thought or believing. By thy Spirit open our understanding. By thy Spirit guide our experience. By our experience, quickened by thy divine love, lead us into all truth. We pray that we may be more thoughtful of others; that we may be more benevolent; that we may

be more just; that we may be more true and pure in our intents; and that the scope and breadth of our life-labor may be more and more ample. And grant that when we shall have passed through the school and experience of this lower state, we may rise, leaving behind the inexperience of the body, into that spirit-land where, with thee for our Teacher and Companion, and with hindrances gone, we shall rejoice forever and ever in the perfection of the heavenly state.

And to thy name shall be the praise. Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

THE HARMONY OF JUSTICE AND LOVE.

"Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."—1 TIM. i., 5.

THE object that the apostle had in uttering these words is shown in the verse preceding:

"Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies which minister questions [that is discussions], rather than godly edifying which is in faith."

He is giving an exhortation to Timothy. He is instructing him how he shall carry himself, and how he shall teach others to carry themselves. His exhortation is this, substantially: "The little, petty questions that spring up among the Jews and among the Jewish Christians, about descent, and about ordinances, and about days, and about observances, and about genealogies—there is no end to them. They only make men dispute one with another; and you never can settle them in the world. They do not make men better. They do not improve their temper; they almost always make them more irritable. They do not make them more lovely; they almost always make them more unlovely. They do not instruct them: they almost always blind them. They make them think that they know, when they do not know. They do not minister to edification." Thus he speaks of those questions which they were so likely to discuss.

Then he declares what the great end and object of preaching is. The end of the commandment—that is, the foundation on which we and everybody must stand; the foundation of all public and private instruction; the thing which the commandment undertakes to bring about in this world; the result which it is to produce—this, the apostle says, is *charity*, by which we mean love—the largest kind of love—love formed "out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." This is the object of all teaching, of all organization, of all religious institutions.

Now, any system of theology that, being legitimately preached, does not produce "charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," is false, no matter what the materi-

SUNDAY MORNING, Feb. 5, 1871. LESSON: 1 THESS. IV. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): NOS. 248, 771, 1323.

als are that are put into it. And every church organization that does not produce "charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," is not a Christian organization. And any administration of the truth, in the hands of any church or sect, no matter whether it was apostolic or not, no matter if Paul, and Peter, and a dozen like them, living to be as old as Methuseleh, had come down to that church or sect, and to that administration, if it did not produce in its members "charity out of a pure and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," would not be a Christian administration. For the end of the commandment is that. That is the thing to be produced by the administration of truth, and by organization, and by preaching. That is the thing which every man is to aim at. That is to be the fruit by which we shall know that men are Christians.

This exposition is remarkable. There are many things in it which I shall not trouble you with to-day—for I shall resume it. But the exposition of the text itself is full of philosophy.

Following Christ's declaration that *on love hung all the Old Testament dispensation*, Paul says, yet more comprehensively, that the whole end and aim of the command—that is, the old dispensation and the new one—is Love. He declares that on that they center. He says that this is the one great supreme end. But that which is peculiar here, is this: that he unfolds that love as complex, either in its nature, or else in its mode of developing the mind. It is not a mere complacency. It is not good-nature and general kindness without any other moral consideration. True Christianity—that which the term *Christianity* means in its highest inspiration—when it speaks of divine love, requires that it shall not be an affection proceeding out of moral indifference, or out of a low, flabby state of half-animal, half-spiritual kindness; but that it shall be a love "out of a pure heart." It is that benevolence which springs from a nature in which the highest moral sentiment predominates. No man is capable of issuing divine love, who is living under the control of his animal appetites—of his pride and selfishness. For the love that the Bible means, and that the apostle here expounds, is that love which is capable of being generated and issued out of pure thoughts; out of the highest spiritual sentiments; out of the noblest moral instincts. It is the fruit and voice and spirit of the highest part of a man's nature, and not of the lower parts of his nature. It is therefore a love that belongs first to God, and next to us by so much as we are divine, or are able to approach in sympathy to the divine elements.

But this is not all. It is a love which must have other attributes;

or rather, it is a love which must carry with it those elements which we erect into attributes as if they were separate from it, and different from it. It is a love which carries with it, as a part of itself, "a good conscience."

Now, *conscience* is but the generic term for *moral sense.* It is the fountain of truth; and so it carries the intellect with it. It is the fountain of rectitude; and so it carries righteousness with it. It is the fountain of honor; and so it carries all that glow and sensibility which surrounds the highest experience of rectitude. A true Christian love is one which must spring out of the highest moral sentiment, and which must also carry with it "a good conscience." "A good conscience" is a part of it. "A good conscience" ribs it up, and gives it backbone, and makes it clear to the core, solid, strong, efficacious. Love without any conscience is namby-pamby. It is mush. True love has in it the noblest sense of character "out of a pure heart." True love has in it an all-embracing sense of truth—the beauty of it, and the reality of it. True love is made up of elements which render it necessary that it shall have a discriminating regard for that which is right. It carries beauty and philosophy and moral excellence in it. It is a comprehensive affection of the soul.

Even all that does not exhaust the wonder of this divine experience of true charity, or love; for its full scope and quality can not be known until we see it with its own atmosphere about it. If it be simply an affection of time and change, limiting itself by the transient elements of this world, then it can in no respect resemble that affection of love which God experiences. Therefore it must have elevation above all physical conditions. A true, divine and Christian love must take hold on the invisible, on the future, on the infinite, on the eternal. And that is the scope of the term "faith" here used as the last-named source of that "charity" which is the end of the commandment—which is that for which God put the commandment into this life.

What, now, is *charity?* It is that sublime likeness to God which carries with it purity of heart, conscience, and faith. It is the generic term for the truths which lie outside of this life—for supersensuous truths—for truths that are invisible—for truths which belong to places and realms that are beyond the reach of the body, or of scientific truths; for science limits itself to that which the body can take hold of. And this is that which the apostle says the commandment was put into the world for. And his business was so to preach and to hold up that commandment as to produce this kind of love, or charity.

From this consideration of the nature of true divine love, or charity, light may be thrown upon the administration of justice and benevolence in the divine government.

It has been the habit of men, on the one side, to feel, and sometimes to teach, that justice has a field all to itself, and that mercy has a field all to itself; as if they were two very different things, not only, but as if when one acted the other did not. In other words, as in human experience men are angry, thoroughly angry, so that they feel nothing else but anger, and then, when that has passed away they are thoroughly good-natured so as not to be at all angry, —their minds being like a handle with two blades, one of which being open the other must be shut, or one of which being shut the other must be open; so men have transferred this purely human affection, according to its weakness, to the divine administration; and there has been an impression that God was a God of benevolence, to be sure, but that he was also a God of justice. It has been supposed that sometimes he is a God of justice, and sometimes a God of love; and that when he is the one, he can not be the other. And when he is a God of justice it behooves sinners to look out for his sword, that goes flashing through the universe—that and nothing else; but when he has vindicated his will, then his sword is put up, and then comes the scepter of mercy—that, and nothing else. As if mercy ever could exist, and be a divine quality, unless it had justice in it all the time! As if any justice could exist that had not mercy in it to the very grain and core! As if you could separate the two! As if, because we, in our whole animal conditions, do separate them, and because we are unable to rise to the highest forms of moral development, we were to carry the analogue up, and separate love and mercy in the divine administration, and make God as poor and meagre as men are! But such has been the habit.

This has tended to raise up reacting views. There have come up on the two sides of this disposition, two general schools of theology, one of which revolves around the conception of God as a benevolent governor. And his benevolence, to their thought, is largely a benevolence of moral indifference, or of fatalism—or fatal good nature. They usually are a rebound from the other school—from those men who have constitutionally a large conscience, and large reflective faculties.

These latter form to themselves an idea of government among men. They believe that law is indispensable to good government, to national life, and to individual happiness. And by their constitution they are on the side of justice, as the administration of law. "Put down," they say, "put down whatever will disturb so-

ciety. If it will get out of the way, let it; but if it will not, put it down. And as much pain as is necessary to do it must be inflicted." They transfer that which is human to the divine nature, and say, "In the infinite realm God is just, and he must govern by truth, and law and justice; and all that will be true and just and upright shall be happy; and all that will not must take the consequences, and be overwhelmed—or, if they are not, it will be because there is some special interposition of divine mercy. They hold up the mechanical character of a God governing, first, by justice. "For," say they, "he must be true." "First pure," they say, "and then peaceable." But has not a man a right to be peaceable until he is pure? Do you suppose it is the absolute, philosophical, arithmetical order, that a man shall be first pure and then peaceable? Must we quarrel until we are pure? And yet, this question is discussed, and arguments are plied to show that God must be just before there is room for anything besides justice. It is said, not only that he must be just, but that in order to save by his Son he must exact justice before he can grant happiness. Mercy, according to their view, must stand back, as if it were something separable from justice, and different from it. They believe that in the government of God, first is justice, with all its infinite modes of administration; with all its infinite penalties; with all its infinite outlying consequences. Their idea of God is that of a Being who stands in a justice that is something other and different from the spirit of love. And this idea has been lifted up before men. And I do not hesitate to say that where the most "Gospel" has been preached (strange inconsistency!), there the predominant idea, to this day, of Christians is, that God is a Being to be feared, that he is a "consuming fire," as he is represented to be in the Old Testament. That has been the one thought which has cast a lurid light over communities. Religion has been made unattractive, and sometimes even repulsive, because men have held that God was a God of justice, and of a justice which was separate and different from love. As if there could be any justice but that which love inspires and directs! And yet that idea has crept into men's beliefs, and the result has been that there have risen up two systems of theology, in one of which the predominant idea had been *justice administered by divine power*. And this idea has gone on augmenting and intensifying, until the hell made by justice has been a caldron only smaller than the heaven into which myriad ages have been pouring contributions. And God, because he was just, has all this time been sitting in the topmost heaven, carrying on this gigantic slaughter of creation! He has gone on creating the eight hundred million creatures of the globe, and pouring them endlessly down,

untaught, unhelped, without good neighborhood, without Christ, without the Bible, without revelation from any source, under the pressure of the circumstances around about them, swept by a resistless fate to their pitiful end, all because God could not spare, or did not spare, or would not spare! That has been preached and held up before men.

I do not wonder, therefore, that there has been a terrific rebound; and that there has risen up on the other side a school of men that said, "Away with such a bloody tyranny! Away with such a notion of God! God is good—too good to make suffering." And yet, the wail of poverty in the street; the winter wind that brings dismay to thousands and thousands of our fellow creatures; the myriad forms of distress which exist throughout the world—these all teach us that there is a God that will allow suffering.

The whole creation has "groaned and travailed in pain until now." And can it be said that there is no purpose in it, no motive for it? Can it be said that there is to be no disciplinary suffering in this world, and in the world to come? And yet there have been men who have made God out to be a Being so good and kind that he cannot bear to cause a sigh or see a tear, that he cannot bear to produce suffering; who have made him out to be a pellucid, smiling, easy-going, good-natured God, that excused everybody; that said, "You had better not do so and so," but still, if they will, lets them, and does not punish them for it; whose indulgence is like that of a foolish parent, who, seeing a child going headlong to destruction, is too kind to subject the child to that discipline which is necessary to arrest it in its downward course.

And so there has sprung up that swollen, obese and miserable conception of a Governor in heaven, who, in his administration, made no difference between right and wrong; no difference between sin and righteousness; no difference between guilt and merit; no difference between obedience and disobedience to law.

If there is anything taught by nature and providence, it is that God is a God of justice as well as of love; that when love rules in heaven, and puts its soft arms around men and lays its soft hands on men, there are bones in those arms and in those hands; that *love* means truth; that *love* means justice; that *love* means government; that love tends to produce the one and the other, all the way through; and that there is no difference between them. Love working by enforcements is justice, and justice working by kindness is love. They are not to be separated. That love which includes justice, is the one identic development of the divine disposition by which, not the means, but the ends are to be looked at.

What is God administering for? What is the purpose of the problem of life but to develop men, and bring out their powers, and carry them forward to a better state of existence? And in working out this problem, God punishes those that are disobedient. He stimulates those who are prone to self-indulgence or discouragement. Tears are lessons. Groans are modes of instruction. Sufferings are ways of discipline. But they are sufferings inflicted, not for the sake of giving pain; not for the sake of avenging any wrong committed; but for the sake of refashioning, reforming. And the love-work of God throughout the universe is the production of love. In other words, "The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."

This whole error springs from the habit of regarding divine attributes purely in the light of human infirmities. It is true that man must reason from his own self to the divine. This is a difficult process of reasoning. It is one that is beset with liabilities to error. Nevertheless, it is the only ladder by which we can ascend from our own moral consciousness to the divine consciousness. You have just as much knowledge of God as you have in yourselves the moral susceptibility to interpret from. If you have no feeling of conscience, you have no means of understanding what conscience is in God. If you have no love, if you have no patience, if you have no long-suffering, then you have no elements by which you can gain a true conception of the divine nature. And so we must fashion our own idea of God from some moral consciousness in ourselves.

But scrupulous care is required that we shall not select our lower nature, and transfer the conception which comes from that to the divine nature. Nor should we take the imperfections of our higher moral nature—those strains of experience which we have by reason of our limitation and our lowness—and raise them up as the ideals and models after which to fashion our conceptions and ideals in reference to God. We are to seize the luminous hours in our experience which reveal the higher manhood of the soul; and from these we are to get an ideal from which we can reason toward God. And even then we shall see Him as through a glass darkly. Our best conceptions, our truest ideals, our highest moods—even these interpret but very imperfectly the divine nature to us. And yet, it is this, if anything, that must interpret him to us.

Now, in interpreting God from ourselves, why should we disjoin these moral emotions, as if there were not in us the hints and beginnings of that which is in God in its perfect form? As men are uncultivated, their faculties work separately and individually. As men are cultivated, their faculties more and more work together.

What we mean by *civilization* and *education* is not simply the development of force in each faculty, but subordination in groups of faculties, and, above all, selection and harmonization between faculties, so that the mind comes out of many different tendencies to a certain sort of moral unity. By *education* and *civilization* we mean especially this: the so using of any faculty, or any set of faculties, that all the rest shall be in harmony with it. Men, when they are yet uncultivated, separate feeling and intellect. Intellect goes one way, and feeling another. As men grow truly cultivated, the feelings carry with them intellect, and the intellect carries with it feeling; and they are not separated. That is a spurious refinement which makes men so fastidious that they must have a power that will not let feeling come up and mix with it. All true culture and development carries feeling in reason, and reason in feeling; for true culture tends toward harmonization and unity. When men are low, there is no such thing as taste, there is nothing but sense, to them. They want fact. They want exactitude. They want literality. They want bestiality, almost. But as men carry up their developments, not simply in the realm or sense, or that which is accurate, or that which is effectual, but in the realm of imagination, of taste, of the higher emotions, these two realms do not interfere with each other, but harmonize. They come together easily in a high state of development.

In the lower forms of life, personal liberty leaves men unbound. They throw off law and throw off all restraint. But in the higher forms of development, men find that the way to be perfectly free, is to be perfectly faithful to duty. That is, obligation, obedience to the highest conception of duty, carries the highest personal liberty to men. Duty and unity belong to the higher conditions of life.

I have already illustrated that love in its lower forms tends to act toward justice or anger at one time, and toward mercy at another time; but as men grow wiser and come into better relations, we see how it is that love carries a perpetual justice, and justice a perpetual love. We see then the noblest representation of the unity of these feelings and their inseparableness, not alone in the household, not alone in the parental relation, but in the relations of friendship.

There is nothing that you are more sensitive to than the excellence of those whom you love most. You cannot bear that those whom you love should not be pure and true. You can tolerate imperfection in any others better than in those whom you love. You want them to represent your highest ideal.

Take the familiar instance of a mother. I think that a great-minded woman, who is all but a Christian by nature, and who is then

enriched by grace, and brought into the conscious sympathy and affinity of the Lord Jesus Christ—I think that such a woman, administering in the household, presents the best conception of moral government, and the best conception of mediatorial work, and the best conception of atoning love, which it is possible to present on earth. Men have gone to kings to get it: I go to my queen. Men go to states: I go to my household. Men go to generic sources: I go to specific. You shall nowhere find a pattern so near to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the grounds and reasons of moral government in the atoning grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, as in a great, rich, ripe, sweet-minded woman, who is bringing up her household of perhaps six, seven, eight, nine children. And the illustration is all the more striking where, as is sometimes the case, a woman does this with poverty in her own family, and yet is sweet-minded, and is always working, though never for herself, and is never weary, and is willing to be interrupted by this, that, or the other one, and is always living for others, in others, under others, spending or being spent to lift up those that are weaker than she—those that first drew nutriment from her breast, and who all the rest of their days have been drawing life from her heart of love, she continually pouring out the spirit of love for them.

And yet does she not bring tears from them? Is there anybody else so rigorous against meanness as she? Oh! how she hates it in her children! But does she gnash her teeth at them, because she hates it? Does she smite them? Yes, sometimes; and she ought to; for she cannot always get along without it. If the infliction of physical pain can be avoided, it is better to avoid it; but there are times when it must be resorted to. It is a matter of temperament and constitution, whether you shall bring in physical as well as moral, or other motives. But this is the thought: that in the administration of love in the family, pain and pleasure are instruments, alternatives. And for the sake of what? for the sake of making suffering? for the sake of satisfying a broken law of the household? for the sake of vindicating the dignity and personality of the mother? No. The end of her administration is to work those children up to a disposition "of love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned"; and she administers to that end, mingling all the time with her administration, truth, purity, duty, and integrity. And her sternest moments of integrity are wrapped about with the atmosphere of love and goodness. And you cannot take the two elements apart. There she stands in the household, and is God to those children till they have grown up; and her example there is one of beneficence, and furnishes the best

conception that we can have upon earth of a government which consists of self-sacrifice; of living for others; of pouring out one's life for others, and of administering so as to bring them up from their low estate to a life of excellence. And in her treatment of them, punishing or rewarding them according to the dictates of her best judgment as to what will promote their highest welfare, you get a better ideal of the government of God than in the whole realm of human life besides. No king, no schedule of kingly government, ever came half so near to representing the divine government as this mother's administration in the household.

Now, is it necessary, even in reasoning of the divine nature from our experience, that we should separate love and justice, and make two Gods—one a God of mercy, and another a God of justice? or that we should make God a God of love at one time, and a God of justice at another? that we should make him now a God of sternness, and then a God of mercy? Not at all. God is always just, or he is never just; he is always merciful, or he is never merciful. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. He always mingles love and justice together; and both of them are instruments for building men up from the lowest forms to a glorious perfected state of manhood in the future.

All such representations, then, of the divine moral government, as naturally and necessarily leave the impression that because God is good he is careless of moral distinctions; all such representations as leave the impression that God is *good-natured*, rather than *good;* that he will not permit suffering; that he will not punish the wrong-doer; that he leaves nature, a vast machine, to turn out results without praise or blameworthiness—all such representations proceed upon a theory of benevolence which is neither Scriptural, experimental, rational nor philosophical. The general effect of such views, if left alone, is to lower the tone of conscience, to diminish the inspiration of spiritual life, and to deteriorate, ultimately, the morals of the community.

On the other hand, any representations of divine justice in the moral government of God which leave it before men as doing or permitting things which fairly shock an intelligent benevolence, does so upon a false philosophy both of government and of the attributes of justice.

The quality of justice is indispensable to the highest form of love. Love thinks, reasons, discriminates, prefers, chooses, condemns, punishes, and yet is never cruel, but is always love. Love *is* just. It is the nature of love to be just, to be true. It does not take two natures to make the two things. It is the office of love, when it shall

have risen up out of its lower condition, and out of its training-ground, to bring forth fruit of justice as well as of love. That is the way it acts, and pursues its end.

It is perfectly fair, then, judging of the truth by various representations of the divine government and of the divine nature, to say that any view which shocks that feeling educated under Christian teaching, in Christian families, and by legitimate Christian truth, is false. In other words, that moral susceptibility, that moral sense of rectitude, and that moral sense of obligation which are the legitimate fruits of Christianity in us, become a tribunal before which we have a right to judge, not God, but men's representations of God; not everlasting truth, but the systems of truth which men propose for our adjudication and for our acceptance. And the moral sense of Christendom is obliged to review, in every few centuries, the systems of theology which exist, and to take out the naturalism and heathenism which there is in them, and substitute for them the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

There is but one other point that I shall make. As yet, I think no man can frame a system for the actual history and the actual events of the world which unites both sides—divine justice and divine love. They are separable among men, but united in God. We have never risen high enough to lay an explanatory conception on the course of history. I do not despair of its being done in this world, but I do not expect that it will be done in my day. The mystery of history is an insoluble problem. Take the highest idea of moral government over the world, and attempt to apply it to the events that have chequered the flow of human life in this world, and you are met at every step by questions unanswerable. In Job you will find precisely the same reasonings that are advanced to-day; you will find there the same line of argument which may be found in Byron's works, in Goethe's Faust, and in the philosophy of each succeeding intelligent age. You find as magnificently set forth in Job as in any subsequent literature of the world, the question of how to reconcile the facts in life with the conception of the nature of a divine Governor who discriminates between right and wrong. That is a question that is not solved; and we have not risen high enough, as yet, to solve it. Ages may do it; but we are not in a state to do it now.

And, as we cannot go backward, and lay an explanatory philosophy on all the events of history, still less are we able to go forward with it. That is to say, it is impossible for a man to lay down a schedule of what God must do and will do in the future. I am shocked to see how little I know, sometimes; and oftener to see how much

other people know. I hear people discussing theology and showing a familiarity with the divine nature and the divine government which is perfectly wonderful. I hear men say that God cannot do this, and that He can do that, as though they had been in His counsels, and found out everything that He knows. "Who by searching can find out God?" why, a theologian—a theological professor! Everything in the alphabet not only, but everything that the alphabet can be made to spell out, he knows. Men make their wicker-work systems of theology the basis of a familiarity with divine thought and divine action and divine being, which is truly astounding. One would think that a man's soul would feel itself abashed, as the revelator did, before angels, and much more before God, whose immensity of experience so far transcends our highest moods of experience; and yet, men look up and say, "God goes just so far in that direction, and just so far in that; he is just so long, and just so broad." They have the doctrine of the divine nature and the divine government all studied out. They can tell you exactly how it opens and shuts. It is like a Chinese puzzle; and if you do not know how you cannot, and if you do know you can, put in every piece just right. If you believe just so, you are "orthodox," but if you do not, you are a "heretic." If you believe so and so, you are a "Pelagian;" or, if you are not that, you are a "*semi*-Pelagian." And what an awful thing it is to be a "Pelagian" or a "semi-Pelagian" all one's life, and not know it! "You are no better than an Arminian," says the Professor. You do not know what that is; but whatever it is, you wish you were not that. And you are afraid of being an "Arian," a "Socinian," a "Pelagian," and pretty much everything else. We have ever so many mad-dog names on points that are mystical, or on points which human knowledge is inadequate to grasp. These blind theories of government are the ones on which there has been more persecution than on any others; and they are to-day the test questions, the shibboleths, that separate between church and church. Is there on earth a body of men that God has more blessed than He has the Methodist church and ministry? And why do they stand separated from the great Presbyterian body? The "Five Points of Calvinism," "Foreordination," the "Decrees," the "Decree of Reprobation" and the "Decree of Election," an "Efficacious Calling," so that a man shall not fall from grace, and a score of other doctrines (I have forgotten them; my education is incomplete in this regard)—what are they but so many metaphysical views of the divine government, and the divine character, which separate these two great bodies of Christians? And so the Arminian stands firing at the Calvinist, and the Calvinist stands firing back at the Armin-

ian. They are at agreement in respect to the great essentials of religion, and yet these non-essentials are a wall of separation between them—though, thank God, the wall is getting lower and lower, and the spirit of love is growing stronger and stronger.

Only see how those that are alike in theologies, and in church polities and sympathies—the great Baptist brotherhood and the Pedo-Baptists—are separated by their difference of belief on one or two minor points of doctrine? One says, "You may baptize children." The other says, "You may not." One says, "You must put them all under." The other says, "It is only necessary to sprinkle them." That is all that separates them. There is not a turnpike so hard, there is not a way so broad, that these brethren can travel on it together with this little bit of difference between them. They hold the same general doctrines, and employ the same symbols; but this slight variation in the mode of administering a rite keeps them apart.

And so it is all the way through Christendom. You shall find churches split up, here on doctrine, there on polity; here on organization, there on robes; here on days. There are the "Seventh-day Baptists," and there are the "Sixth-day Baptists"—no, not Sixth-day Baptists—yes; at any rate there are those that say you must keep Saturday, and there are others that say you must keep Sunday. And if I laugh at them, and say "What difference does it make," they say, "None, so far as the day is concerned; But is not *obedience* something? That is the question." "Eh!" says the Seventh-day Baptists, "Did not God command us to observe the seventh day? and is *disobedience* nothing?" And so they entrench themselves behind this technicality of obedience or disobedience.

If I go to those who believe in immersion, and say, "Do you really think that it makes any difference, when one is baptized, whether he goes under the water, or is sprinkled?" they say "It makes no difference so far as the mere effect on the individual is concerned; but if Christ said, 'Go under the water,' the *obedience* or *disobedience* makes a great deal of difference." Well, I cannot get away from that. They have got me there.

If I go to an Episcopalian, and say, "Now, do you think it makes any difference about my salvation whether I am in the 'true church' or not? Do you not suppose that I can get to Heaven out of my own church as well as out of yours?" he says, "Well, the mere church is nothing, but if Christ said that this was the true church, the *obedience* is something."

And so they all have their little catch-word *obedience*, as if that were the marrow of Christianity; as if God thought of these little

screws, and nail-heads, and tacks! They may have some value in the machinery; but they are only parts, and minor parts of it. "The end of the commandment," says the apostle, the whole thing which the commandment aims at and is designed to produce, "is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."

Now go home and quarrel over your *doxies*. Go home and quarrel over your churches. But remember that he who loves God, and is accepted of him, he whose love is outpouring an intelligent beneficence from a pure heart, from a sound conscience, and from a true, unfeigned faith in the future, is the sweet product, the golden fruit of the tree of life. And pray, whatever may become of baptisms, and days, and ordinances, and rituals, which are permissible, but not authoritative—pray that the end which the commandment seeks may be wrought out in you.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our Father, teach us to pray. As thy disciples gathered about thee, blessed Saviour, and asked knowledge of the way of thought and faith and love, so do we. We do not need to ask thee for daily bread, as though we were hungry; for our wants are abundantly supplied. It is rather for us to give thanks than to solicit. Nor do we come to thee to ask thy help by which we shall be able to live in all this outward estate. Already thou hast so inspired us, and hast surrounded us by so many influences, that we are guided and taught and sustained. But how shall we come to thee as children come? How shall we understand thee when only out of ourselves can we find and fashion those elements of thought by which to discern thee? Oh! how poor are we in goodness! and how is love itself but a struggling taper in us! Often plunged in selfishness; often worldly and calculating; seldom shining far above the horizon, and beyond the reach of mist and vapor; poor as the stars, how shall we understand thy nature of love and infinite beneficence that wearies not; that never forsakes truth; that never forsakes justice; that never forsakes goodness; that bears in itself eternal truth and justice and goodness, and yet forever loves, beneficent on every side, in act, in thought, in plan, in administration, in attribute, and in fruit and outcome; that in all things is full of the desire to create happiness in men, and to continue them in enjoyment? How shall we form anything in ourselves that shall raise us to the conception of the goodness of thy nature? What do we know of long-suffering, who are tired in a day? If thou that sittest on the circle of the earth art not tired; if thou that art ever on the battle-field of life art unwearied; if thou art the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, what is there in us that can interpret thee? Who, by searching, can find out God? And if we draw near to thee to pray; if we would commune with thee, exchanging our thoughts for thine, speaking with thee as children may speak with a parent, then we need to say to thee, Lord, teach us how to pray. Teach us better things in life. Teach us nobler feelings. Teach us those aspirations that shall break upward toward thee. Teach us that renunciation that shall cure pride, and selfishness, and envy, and jealousy, and every hateful and malign passion. Teach us to live above the power of the senses, and in the realm and under the dominion of faith, more and more, from day to day, so that every day we may be better fitted for communion with thee.

And now, Lord, we desire to thank thee, this morning, for the help of days past. For our sky is not altogether clouded. Bright is it in places, though there are storms in the heavens which our passions bring. We discern thee afar off, though we see but thy retreating glory. Thy face we cannot see while we are in the flesh. We rejoice in our past experience, and in the hope which it begets in us for the future. And we desire to give ourselves to the ministration of thy good Spirit, opening our hearts wide, and not grieving thee by our coldness or want of the disposition to welcome thee. Enter, O Spirit of light and comfort and purity! and cleanse our hearts. Illumine them, and fill them with the divine life. And we pray that we may walk with a holy hope and faith of that life which is not far beyond us, and to which we aspire. We shall not carry thither all our joys. Many of them are earthly joys which dry up upon the stalk, and which the wind rattles; and these shall be left behind. We shall not always be seeking those things which perish in the using. We shall not say to the eye, Thou art my God; nor to the ear, Thou art my king. We shall yet live and be as the sons of God, and dwell in an immortality of nobler pleasures, and brighter joys,

and purer aspirations, forever fulfilling themselves. We shall be as the children of the living God.

Grant that that life beyond may never quite fade out, and that there may come more frequent hours when it shall shine out like the very gate of heaven. Speak to us, O thou blessed God! by thy inaudible voice, that the soul only knows. Grant us the witness of the Spirit that we are sons of God. And if we do not know what that means, may it rise up in us as music heard afar off, whose tones cannot be distinguished. And may it center in us. And so may we hear the sounds and feel the influences from the heavenly land. And may we long, if it be the will of God, to lay down our burden, and our duty, and our life, that we may find our nobler life and our better joys with thee.

Accept the thanks of all those who come up this morning to thank thee that thou hast heard their prayers; of those that thank thee for strength given them to accomplish the purposes about which they were sent in thy providence; of those that thank thee for great escapes from circumstances of fear; of those that thank thee for restored health; of those that thank thee that in the midst of deep bereavements and afflictions and distress, thou hast held their head up above the wave. Accept the thanksgiving of those that would thank thee if they dared, but that think they must not. Break through all such fears, and show thyself not only to those that are near, but to those that are afar off all the more. Be with those who think themselves to be thy children, and give thanks to-day. And those that are wandering from the fold, away from their Father's house—grant that they may have a better mood to-day, and lift them up to a plane where they shall have some thoughts of thanksgiving to their God.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless all that are in trouble. And if they have come up here to have their troubles lightened, give them not release unless it be best for them; but say to them (and may they feel thine arm about them), "My grace shall be sufficient for thee." And we pray that there may be this release, that we shall be able to bear trouble by the grace of God, and to become stronger by it, and clearer in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, by darkness and by light.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt be near to those that cannot come unto us, nor mingle their voices here; who are shut up, it may be, by sickness. Be gracious to them, and send thine angels to minister sweet thoughts to them of that rest which remaineth for the people of God. May there open up before them light from the other world, and may all their gloom and sadness be cheered away by the communications of thy dear Spirit.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt be near to those that watch with the sick; to those that carry great burdens; to those who, in beholding the play of life, recall their own lives, and all the multitude of the mercies of it. Shed the influence of thy Spirit upon them, we beseech of thee.

And we pray for those who are disconsolate, and who sit in darkness of mind. May a great light arise upon them. Go to them, thou comforting Saviour.

And if there be those who mourn over their sins to-day; if there be those who are heart-broken in view of their own wickedness; if there be those whose consciences bear witness against them, and all of whose better nature stands up and accuses them, stand thou, dear Saviour, on their side. Justify them, speak peace to them, though they be sinful. And grant that they may hear thy voice saying to them, Love and justice are united. Thy sins are forgiven thee. Rise, go, and sin no more.

We beseech of thee, O Lord our God! that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all according to their own circumstances—in the unmentionable

circumstances of their life; in their hidden thoughts, or hidden joys, or hidden griefs; in those troubles that they cannot themselves understand, or that, if they could understand them, they could not mention.

Be with those that are far from us to-day on errands of thy providence, wherever they are. May thy Spirit go with them. May they find a home, may they enjoy the Sabbath, and may they find a sanctuary of worship, though it be in the wilderness.

Be with those who have gone down upon the great deep. Especially be with thy servant, our brother,* who for so many years has ministered near unto us, and here frequently. Be with him and with his, and keep him yet in the hollow of thy hand. And during the months of his separation from his people, and in distant lands, Lord, bless him, in body and in soul. And spare him to come back again, and to shine brighter, and be stronger and more fruitful in the work of the Master than ever he has been before. And keep the people of his charge, and all their households. May death spare them, and light abound with them. And may the sanctuary still be strong, and thy servants labor together for the things that are lacking now in their midst.

And so we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless all the churches near unto us. May we think more and more of them, and not altogether of ourselves. May we seek to take hold of hands with all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. And carry forward thy great work in this city and throughout all our cities, and throughout this whole land.

We pray for schools and colleges and seminaries of learning.

We pray for all that are in authority in this nation. We pray that thou wilt give us magistrates thatshall fear God. May our laws become purer; and may the administration of them become more and more righteous. We beseech of thee that thou wilt remember all governors and counsellors in this Union. Be pleased to remember the President of these United States, and his cabinet in counsel with him. Give them wisdom, and give them the Spirit of the living God, that they may do their duty as in the fear of the Lord.

Bless all that are in authority throughout the world. May they rule diligently, and in mercy, and without selfishness, and without oppression.

We beseech of thee that wars may speedily come to an end. May men learn a better way. May they learn to lift up the light of knowledge upon the whole earth. May darkness and superstition flee away, and the bright day of knowledge and of piety come, and all the earth see thy salvation.

Which mercies we ask in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt set thy seal to the truth spoken. Grant that we may rise up into the higher, the diviner love. May we not give up things that are right, and things that are just. May we know the natural language of true love. May we know that we cannot experience that love if we are heedless and conscienceless and faithless. And grant, we pray thee, that we may more and more experience the sympathy of divine patience and benevolence, and bring forth richly such fruits that men, seeing our good works, shall glorify our Father which is in heaven. And help us to sing once more. Go home with us, and make our homes sweet and redolent as heaven. We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

* Rev. Dr. Storrs.

LOVE,

THE COMMON LAW OF THE UNIVERSE.

"Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."—1 Tim. i., 5.

I have already spoken from this passage, defining what "the end of the commandment" means—namely, the results at which it aims; the fruits which it seeks to produce; the reason which it has for being, for exercising authority, and for its activity in the world.

It aims to secure the great, the universal spirit of benevolence, charity, love—by whichever term your philosophy styles it. But that it may not be supposed that charity, as here employed, is a mere mild sentiment, a mere well-wishing, kind, but weak, or at least feeble, the apostle gives his conception of Christian charity. It is a feeling that arises, not from any casual impulse of nature. No experience can rise to the height that justifies you in calling it charity or love, which springs merely from interest, or momentary generosity. It is that charity or that state of love which can spring, and does spring, only from a pure heart—or, in other words, a heart which has been divinely developed; which has been opened up into a state of symmetry and purity. That is a heart in which the moral and spiritual elements predominate over all casual impulses, and over all the lower nature of man. That is, out of the very highest moral and spiritual elements of man's being must this love spring which it is the nature of the law to produce. Nor ought we to think that this love, or good-will, which springs from men's noblest faculties, always works by the conferring of happiness, or that it seeks only present good. It seeks men's enjoyment by men's perfection. Therefore it is always an element that goes with the spirit of justice, equity, righteousness. Love out of a pure heart—out of the noblest instincts of nature, love that goes with a sound conscience—that is, with that whole mood of our moral being which discriminates between right and wrong, good and bad, high

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and low in character—this is the love which always carries with it moral purity, and which carries with it, also, discriminating equity.

But then, it might still be thought that it was a sentiment which was exerted upon men for the sake of their lower life, for their present convenience; and therefore it is added, "By faith unfeigned."

Now, "Faith is the evidence of things not seen." Faith is the soul's realization of those truths which are invisible. In other words, the action of that part of our mind is supersensuous. It does not work by the senses. It is higher than the scientific side of the mind, therefore, if by *science* you mean the art of knowledge that comes through the senses.

So, then, we conclude that benevolence, or the love which Christianity develops and makes the supreme end of its existence, is not a monochord; that it is a composite thing; that it carries with it the great sterling elements of truth, of righteousness, of justice; that it carries with it, not the present existence alone, but the life that is to come—the great realm of faith. It is the largest and supremest action of the mind which is conceivable.

Certain inferences were made during our former consideration of this passage which we shall not recapitulate. Certain questions were argued which it is not necessary now to argue again. There is further matter to be derived from the words of the Apostle. And I remark:

1. The commandment given to men may be assumed to be, as it is taught in the word of God to be, a commandment which represents God's life and disposition. Not only is it a transcript of the divine will, but it is also a transcript, to a certain extent, of the divine life. That there are many things that man is commanded to do, either by words addressed directly to him, or by the organized laws of nature, which do not belong to the divine Being, is not to be denied; but of the fact that the great ends of human existence are the same as those ends which God himself pursues, we are not left in doubt. And when that, on which all the law and the prophets hang, when the law of the New Testament—the new commandment—is declared to be love, and love in that large way in which it is expounded by the apostle, it is fair to say that this is the universal law—a law not for man alone, relative to his lower condition, but for all beings in the universe, in their various conditions, from the highest to the lowest. It is because man is a member of the universe, and because God is training the whole universe to final unity, and because all his intelligent creatures are to come into unity with each other by coming into likeness and unity with him, that this great law of love is instituted. And this law is the law of

heaven as really as it is the law of earth; and of God as really as of any of his children. It is a law which includes all beings alike—the highest and the lowest; the least developed and the most nearly perfected.

Always, then, and everywhere, now, and hereafter, we are under a law which is turning us towards this one great element that the apostle declares to be the end and object of the world's existence—the production in us of this superlative and overruling feeling of true benevolence: not an indifference to goodness; not an indifference to truth; not an indifference to right and wrong. It is a benevolence which includes in it all these things; which makes them a part of itself; which wraps them up, and strengthens them, and gives them vigor.

2. The genius of creation and the genius of the universe may therefore be inferred, properly, to be benevolence. This does not exclude the use of stern or of forceful elements, by any means; but it does determine the purpose for which they are used; and it does determine the average direction which it may be supposed is taken by an economy in which all things are used under the supervision and inspiration of a central and divine benevolence. Which way time is traveling, which way the universe is traveling, and under what power of inspiration, is a matter of profound importance. Nature has the power of teaching much. It has taught but little. It is susceptible of teaching far more than men have ever yet found out by it. Men have found in nature, comparatively speaking, but little in respect to God; and that little has been, if I may so say, on the side of the natural or physical attributes of God. We have found out from nature how God treats matter; we have found out from nature how he treats the lower forms of animated existence; we have found out from nature how he treats the lower forms of humanity: but hitherto nature has been studied by men who were undeveloped themselves, and only parts of what it is capable of teaching has been found out. The higher reaches of knowledge nature has not disclosed as it has the power of disclosing them. Even the apostle, reasoning in Romans, declares that men might have found out God's "Eternal power and God-head" "by the things that are made"; but the apostle does not say that we can learn God's benevolence from nature. I do not believe that the terms and arguments of divine benevolence can be sustained by that argument. Nature is full of apparent contradictions. Force, in the history of the world, has been stronger than right. Cruelty has had more scope than kindness among men. There is that mystery of organization by which, from the lower to the higher, each thing is more or

less made to depend upon the destruction of something beneath it. We see on every hand the working of that law by which being feeds on being, clear up to man. And there it is only reversed when the Gospel comes in, teaching us rather to suffer for another than to make another suffer for our good. At that point is introduced the law of benevolence. But looking through nature comprehensively, in its lower ranges, it would be difficult to discern the evidence of a law of benevolence administered by a divine providence. In the material world there is much that is beautiful, and there is much that is fit, and there is much that can be made to serve benevolent uses; but the question whether the world itself, in its construction, indicates a benevolent Artificer, will be settled very much according to the circumstances and education of the person that reasons. If he is himself evenly balanced in constitution; if he has been brought up charmingly; if he has been very happy; if those around about him have been very happy; and if he has looked upon every thing from the churchly point of view, and seen every thing under the most favorable circumstances, he will be likely to think that nature says that God is a God of love. Nature evidently makes him wise and powerful; but when you look at the outlying race; when you look, not at the few that are fortunately circumstanced, not at the few that are housed and husbanded in the family, but at the masses of mankind; when you look at the vast volume of animal life, and attempt to find in their history evidence of the divine benevolence, you fail. To me it is impossible to see in the lower history of the universe proof that God is benevolent. That part of nature does not determine it.

But then, we find this: that the lowest part of creation, inorganic elements, and the lowest forms of organic material existence, are governed by absolute force. Rising higher, we find, in the lowest forms of human existence, that fear and intense terror begin to be introduced as a motive-force. Rising still higher, we find that as the lower forms of social life come into the sphere of voluntariness, motives grow milder. That is, men are susceptible to higher influences, and they have new points of susceptibility developed in them, as they rise in the scale of being. And as new ranges of faculties come in, you will find coming in with them higher principles of government, that tend to control men by the higher and better elements, and not by the lower ones; until, when you come to the higher forms of human life by being educated and developed, then you will find that the governing force is implied, rather than used. That is the undertone, the sub-base. It may be that the melody runs far above it in the direction of piety and moral life.

In other words, you will find that there is an ascending scale, and that the divine government which is indicated in nature is this: when things are low they are governed by forces which are appropriate to them; and from the lowest point all the way up, in every stage of existence, the governing motives are exactly adapted to the condition of the things governed, and all that is low is governed by force, and force that has in it coercion, yea, bruising severity simply because it is the only thing that is adapted to the lower stage of development; because it is the only influence that can at that point be brought to bear upon existing things.

Taking in the whole of nature, then, there is an analogy which points toward a central benevolence, in this: that while at the lowest state of existence we see nothing but fate, nothing but force, there is amelioration from that point, in an ascending scale. It goes higher and higher, from force to lenity, and from lenity to mercy and love. And the analogy points still farther. It points to a realm beyond this life, where all government is benevolence, and where, having emerged from lower and disciplinary conditions, the race and universal existence will be governed supremely, not any longer by the law of force (for their state shall have been ameliorated); not any longer by the motives of fear and terror (for they shall have escaped from the bondage of these things); not any longer by considerations of interest (for they shall have risen higher than these); but by the principle of love. At last there are hints and indications of nature that the race is governed by disciplinary and recuperative forces.

But, in order to this conclusion, the Christian idea of pain and suffering must supplant the old Roman, the Tuscan, that is, the heathen, idea. Our notions of justice, to an extent that is hardly dreamed of by ourselves, have been vitiated by the infection of heathenism. There existed nations that loved the infliction of pain, as the old Romans did. And the Spanish bull-fights to-day are a coarse exhibition of that which pervaded ancient Roman jurisprudence and afterwards the Romish Church, and which we did not shred off at the Reformation. For many things then stuck to us which we might well have got rid of. This most repulsive idea of pain and suffering was derived from the Tuscans, who are said to have had, as shown in their art and literature, the most horrible conception of fate and of the future existence of all nations that ever lived on the face of the globe. And this conception of the infliction of basilar, fundamental pain and cruelty, as the right of the gods, has been handed down from age to age; and men have framed into their theology the idea that, for reasons of his own glory, God foreordained, from all eternity, por-

tions of the human race to be vessels of wrath, to be cursed and made miserable forever and forever. And we find that infernal, heathen conception of God coming on down to us through the various modifications and channels of theology. So that yet, in the minds of many men, this pain and this suffering are a part of the divine sovereignty and the divine right, indicating in God a love of pain and suffering as such.

Now, you cannot, in calling a being by another name, make him enjoy suffering without making him malignant; and any being that loves suffering for its own sake, any being on whose heart the sight of suffering produces a pleasurable response, is infernal. And there has been many and many a man who said his prayers to the devil thinking that he sat on the throne of Jehovah.

What is the Christian idea of pain and suffering? That it is a means to an end; and that the end is so blessed and so glorious in the fruition of joy as to justify the intermediate stage of suffering and pain. Thus justice is not ignored. Christianity recognizes a government of justice, and a government of pains and penalties, now and hereafter. But they are not pains and penalties for the sake of indulging any being in an unnatural and hideous ecstacy. Every throb of the great heart of Christianity is a blow to the infernal conception that God sits and enjoys the sufferings of the damned. It is enough to make men renounce their faith even to think of such a conception as this, as taught with authority, and as kept alive in some of the most excellent Christian sects of this day. It is a hideous, outrageous slander upon the grandeur of the love and the purity of the administration, and the beneficence of the wisdom, of the Ruler of the universe.

"But," it is asked, "is there not Scripture for it?" There is Scripture for anything that a man wants Scripture for. Yes, there *is* Scripture for it, just as there are knives in the ore of the mountain. You can get the ore, and you can make assassins' knives of it, or you can make plowshares of it. Scripture is a great forest, and you can go into it and cut timber and make it up into a great variety of utensils. You can make a flail out of this text; or you can make a plow-handle out of it; or you can build it into a cradle; or you can make out of it a warrior's spear-handle. Scripture is the most usable and adaptable thing in the world. It is with that as it is with nature. God has spread good and bad through the world. There are poisons here, and fruits there, and grains yonder; precipices lift themselves up on one side, and meadows and gardens stretch themselves out on the other; dangers and benefits, sorrows and joys, lie before men; and they can take the one or the other.

And the necessity of choosing is a part of their discipline. It is a part of the education of their intelligence. And it is their interest to take the right things.

The spirit of Christianity, as I have already intimated, is that of remedial suffering, which is consonant with the spirit of true benevolence.

"Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

This is the charter of administration. It is the marrow of history. It is revealed by the spirit of Christianity that there are in the divine love all these operative forces. God, although he is full of beneficence, governs matter as matter must be governed. And as the existences which he governs rise in the scale, he changes the form of government from that of brute force to that of moral force. Even in the lower forms of human existence, physical power is of necessity employed, and government is painful; but as men rise higher under this education, there come in social motives and interests. And as in this school of discipline men rise still higher, they come into an academy where the government is more gentle, where there is less pain and more pleasure; and when they have come to this stage in the development of their moral sense, they have reached such a degree of spiritual susceptibility and refinement that God can deal with them as with sons, and they become partakers of the divine nature, and are no more strangers and foreigners, but are friends of God, and enter into his confidence, and come under his immediate inspiration, and live by the power of his Spirit which is in them.

Now, to me, the comfort of all this is in this thought that the genius of the universe, that that which has its hand on the helm, is not fate, is not cruelty, and is not indifference; that all the vast work that is going on is a work which is under the inspiration of this central spirit of benevolence. It is a benevolence that is determined to have purity, because that is the most beneficent thing. It is a benevolence that is determined to use all the instruments that are necessary to secure purity now and hereafter. Therefore it is love "out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." It is a love which takes in the present and the future, the now and the hereafter. It is a love that takes in the whole being of man. This it is that presides.

Time is a school, and God is the universal Schoolmaster, and men are learners, and are graded from step to step as they are to take the education that belongs to the successive stages of their being.

Such a providence as this is a joy. It inspires one with some hope for the world. If I thought that this world was a huge bag, and that nations, like cats, were swung round by some giant hand, they, meantime, fiercely scratching and fighting with infernal noise, what would I preach for? I would say to men, with the profoundest sorrow, "Get all the pleasure you can, give yourselves up to hilarity, eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow you die."

But such is not the world, and such are not the squabbles of life and time. There are the fitful spasms of force; there are the gigantic processions of woe and cruelty; there are groanings and travailings in pain until now; but there is a divine purpose under them all, which is working out results that issue from the very soul and heart of love. There is a good time coming. It will take it a great while to come; the road is long and the work is large; but it *is* coming; and even if I do not see it for a thousand ages yet, it is a joy and a comfort for me to know that it is coming. Some will see it here. The time will come when the world will cease to grope; when no man shall be obliged to say to his neighbor, "Know ye the Lord." The time will come when men shall beat their swords into pruning-hooks. The time will come when all the earth shall rest, and there shall be one more note joined to that universal choir that chants the praise of God, and of supreme and victorious Love.

3. Any system of theology, any style of preaching, which leaves upon the mind any other impression than that of divine benevolence as the regent disposition of God, and the animating spirit of providence, is unscriptural, false and pernicious. It cannot be doubted that systems of theology have left other impressions, and that preaching does leave, and that continuously, other impressions on men's minds.

I distinctly remember that as a child my predominant thought of God was one of fear and dread, because I supposed that the side of God which was turned toward me was vengeance. I was taught that I was sinful long before I knew anything but that I was so. I supposed that I was a sinner because I did not feel sinful. I was taught that the not feeling that which unquestionably was the underlying element of my being, was one of the tokens of sin. And I strove to feel; because through the gate of feeling I hoped to pass that wall on the other side of which the sun shone. I was on the north side, where all was snow; and they told me that if I could get on the other side, I should find that there the sun had shone so long that the vio-

lets were already blooming. I made the effort; but the snow was too deep for me. And until after I had reached my majority, my thought of God was one of dread and fear, because the side of the divine mind that was turned toward me was the side of "justice." My thought of God was that he was the *Just Judge;* that whenever men repented of their sin he would become the forgiving Friend and the universal Father, but that until men did repent, and just so long as they stood unrepentant, God was toward them a consuming fire. And that I consider to be a heresy that strikes the whole Gospel of Christ flat in the face. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son" to die for it. God did not love the world because Christ coaxed him to. Out of love, out of infinite depths of desire and kindness, he gave forth from himself this expression of his nature. Oh! if I had only known that God loved me, and felt toward me as the mother feels toward the child; if some one had said to me, "Even as your mother takes you up in her arms to expostulate with you, to expose to you your fault that she may lead you out of it, letting no others know it till it is cured and passed away; as she helps your infirmity, just so God does. It is the divine nature to be medicinal to infinite weakness and want. God does not wait till you are worth loving (for you will not be, this side of eternity), but he takes you up just as you are, that he may guide and mold you into lovableness. And now, while you are a sinner, while your heart is far from God and sympathy and love; while yet there is the whirl of passions in you, God does sympathize with you and love you; and you are beloved. Look up, and see that all is bright and winning and inviting." Oh! if these things had been told me when I first needed to know them, I might have walked in peace when I was eight years old—for I was subject to profound religious feelings at that early age. But they were hidden from my eyes then; and till I was twenty-five years old I had no thought that it was the nature of God to be sorry for sinners. The impression left on my mind was, that God was first pure and true and just; and that then, if men conformed to certain conditions, he would be loving. Whereas, I preach that God is loving all the time, that he was loving from the beginning, and that he will be loving to the end. I preach that love is the Alpha and Omega of the divine nature. And when I speak of God's love, I mean no puerile thing; no maudlin sentiment: I mean a love that is armed with force, and fear, and pain, and all things that are necessary to work the universe up from its low, early conditions, through all the changing phases of animalism, and through all the planes of humanity, and bring it at last into perfect unity and accord with the divine

nature and the divine government. This is a love that does not scruple to give pain; but it is pain for medicine. It is a love that does not scruple to smite and to punish—long and terribly to punish; but it is punishment which is inflicted as the bitterest and most loathsome cup is put to the lip of the babe by the mother, because she loves the child, and believes that in that cup is the hope of its life. God subjects individuals and nations to pains and sufferings that they may be brought out of their low estate, and not because he wants to see them sizzle and fry. Never does God punish because there is malignity in the divine mind—never! *never!*

We are, therefore, not only bound in our preaching to preach right doctrine, but we are bound to preach it with the right emphasis. I think there has been more error in emphasis than in statement. There has been enough, in all conscience, in statement; but there are many who hold technically right views of theology, while they so emphasize one or the other side of the divine nature that the impression left upon the minds of those that hear and read is unfavorable. Take a familiar example.

A man tells you, some day, "You have hurt the feelings of all those people over yonder." "I?" you say. "Yes, you." "Why, bless your heart, what have I said or done? I did not want to hurt the feelings of any of them." No, you did not voluntarily hurt their feelings; but you carried your being in such a way that it rode over them, and crushed them here, and hit them there. You did not take any consideration for them; so that every one of them has felt bruised or wounded, one way or another, by you. "Well," you say, "I did not intend to." No, you did not intend to; but it was the way that you carried yourself that hurt their feelings.

Now, there are men who are afraid that if they give up God's justice, if they remit on that side, if they loose the bands, and do not keep the spear-point to men's consciences all the time, if they do not preach the law continually, men will fly off from the truth, and go to destruction. And so they emphasize justice to such a degree, in their preaching, as to produce fear, and not love—dread, and not trust. Whereas, God should be preached as the most glorious and the most attractive and the most winning Being in the universe. He should be so preached as to leave the impression on the minds of men that he sums up in his nature all things that are good, or he could not be the almighty Good—for *God* is but a contraction for *good.*

4. In church-life there must be a practical recognition and an emphatic honoring of this principle that love or benevolence is the nature of all law, organization, institution, custom, or observance. And

although the instruments by which we educate men are not to be lightly esteemed, or loosely set aside, or carelessly drawn away, or recklessly changed, yet, when it is necessary to give up either the spirit of true benevolence or dogmas, and forms, and ceremonies, by which we seek to produce that benevolence, we are to cling to the benevolence, and let these other things go. This principle was clearly enunciated by Christ, when he said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. And I say, The church was made for man, and not man for the church. Dogmas and doctrines were made for man, and not man for them. Theology was made to help men, and men were not made to be sacrificed to it. All ordinances and institutions and commandments are designed to subserve men's uses and interests; and it should be so held and taught in our churches. The end sought, which throws back its value on all instruments and processes, is the spirit of true beneficence, kindness, love, self-sacrifice, helpfulness. The maintenance of powerful benevolence is more vital to the Christian Church than dogmatic systems.

Suppose a church do all believe right things, and all of them feel wrong ones, what is the use? Suppose a church do all subscribe to one confession of faith, and all of them quarrel with each other, and are full of jealousies, and envyings, and debates, and strifes, what does it amount to, that they are theologically united? Suppose a church is united in polity, and they all have the same government, and the same method of worship, from A to Z, and all of them are devoid of charity, what does it signify? Paul tells us, that though a man speak with the tongue of men and of angels and have not charity, he is as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. The apostle teaches us that all generosity is unworthy of the name which is not prompted by the spirit of benevolence. He says:

"Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

Charity—the divine holiness-producing, happiness-making spirit of love—this is the end of the law. It is the reason for the church. It is the reason for doctrines. It is the reason for polity and for worship. And yet, men sacrifice the feeling for the sake of keeping the instruments by which the feeling is produced. Men will agitate and embroil a whole generation in disputing about doctrines of charity, engendering all manner of rancorous feelings. Princeton will not speak to New Haven, and New Haven will not speak to Andover; and all theological seminaries are thrown into paroxysms. And they fiercely assail each other, and attempt to drive each other into Orthodoxy. And the churches, one after another, take it up; and all candidates for the ministry are rigidly examined on doctrinal points;

and heresy-hunters, like a pack of hounds, are at their heels, to see that they are sound in truth and Orthodoxy.

But where is that benevolence which truth and Orthodoxy were meant to serve? Where is that benevolence for the sake of which truth and Orthodoxy were ordained? Where is that benevolence by which men are to be brought into true sympathetic relations one to another? It is sacrificed for the sake of theology. And to-day our churches are set apart one from another, and sects are arrayed one against another, because the cohesion of benevolence is wanting.

All denominations are insisting upon it that we must *obey*. But what is *obedience?* Are we to be obedient to the outside, or to the inside? Is it to the shuck or to the kernel that we are to be obedient? Which is greater obedience, that of obeying the law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," "and thy neighbor," or that of yielding allegiance to a doctrine which prescribes some outward observance? Which is the greater obedience, that which is demanded by the divine law of love, or that which is demanded by a dogma as to whether you will go under the water or not, or as to whether you will keep Sunday or not? These dogmas are mere outside leaves. They do not touch the root of the thing.

The law of benevolence says, "Do you love?" There is the rub; and men are saying, "No, we do not love; but the reason why we do not love, and fellowship, and coöperate, is that we must obey." Obey how? By putting on black during one part of the service, and white during another? By standing with the back to the audience during one part of the reading, and with the face to the audience during another part? "This," they say, "is ordered, and we cannot countenance any deviation from it." And so people sacrifice benevolence to externals—to the external of externals. And so have such fribbles deluded men—and wise men. Is there any place where Satan has spun more webs, and caught more victims, than in the Church of Christ? The church has been the slaughter-house of Christianity.

The heart of Christendom has never been concentrated as it ought to be upon that which the apostle declares to be the end of the law. The whole economy of grace is but the means or instrument by which men are to seek to develop this larger nature. Never have the church come up to a conception of this large Christian charge; and I think they have never had a universal enthusiasm for it, which would not let it go out from their sympathy. We have had revivals in which there has been enthusiasm for the propagation of the faith. We have had awakenings in which the power of the church was brought to bear for the spread of its views and doctrines. The church has had its periods of revival for dogmatic settlements.

Again and again truths have been rounded out, as men have supposed, by councils. Successive ages have gone down in which churches have been stirred up with scholastic fervor. The church has had its celestial rage for organization, if I may so call it; and has arranged how it should exist, and in what shape, and with what members, and with what distribution of authority. And the whole world has stood in suspense while these things were going on "for the sake of charity"—which charity, meanwhile, was destroyed. The church has had its fervor and revivals over ordinances, and over the reformations of ordinances. It has dispossessed them of idolatry, and reared them into new forms. It has killed some, and given added life to others. It has had its fervors of philanthropism and humanity. And now it is more in that condition, perhaps, than it has been at any other period. Probably there was never a time when there was so much that was in accordance with the second member of the great law, as at the present day. There have been times when "Thou shalt love thy God" has been fulfilled and kept almost to the forgetting of "Thou shalt love thy neighbor." "Thou shalt love thy neighbor," in the form of humanitarianism and the relieving of the ills of the race, has been the inspiration of our day almost to the forgetting of "Thou shalt love thy God." But when, in any age, has the whole church been seized, as by a divine inspiration, with the thought and the impulse of unfeigned and cheerful love one to another? When has there been the feeling in the church, "Benevolence, after all, in its largest, purest, truest Christian type, is the most precious thing we have, and that must be guarded, whatever becomes of doctrine. We must keep this spirit whatever becomes of ordinances. We must preserve beneficence, whatever becomes of orthodoxy. We must not lose this heart-love or heart-summer?" When has the church ever had that feeling or inspiration? When has it swept through any nation, or from nation to nation? This highest type of Christian experience the church is yet without.

5. We are to expect, in each individual, benevolence of character, and real charity of life, as the true fulfilling of the law. In instituting a series of educating influences, we are to take into account what truths will be more likely to restrain evil and purge the soul to purity than others. It makes a great deal of difference, in instituting educational influences, whether a man believes one thing or another. Truth is better than error, in just this, that it has more power to produce the final state of beneficence in its complex form. There is such a thing as the work of the truth; and therefore we are not to say that if a man is sincere, that is enough. That would be

absurd on the ship. If a man takes his reckoning by his chronometer, and it is all wrong, will his sincerity bring him into New York, or cast him away on the beach? If a man says, "Not plowing is wiser than plowing; sow your seed upon the hard ground, and let it be—that is the best way," will his sincerity make it the best way? If a man says, "Chaff is just as good as wheat, and if the farmer only thought so, and sowed it in faith and sincerity he would get a good crop," would he? If a man says, "Thistles are as good as wheat: only sow them sincerely and you will find them to be so," will you? The more sincere a man is who sows cockles and thistles and burdocks, the worse it is for him. Sincerity does not change natural law. And so I say that in instituting an economy of education, in instituting means by which to propagate religion, it is very important that men should be true; and sincerity is no substitute for the truth.

I do not say that the ordinances of the church are of no importance; I say that they are important, and that they require great thought and wisdom; but they are never to be so much thought of as to dispossess that for which they were themselves created—the great central spirit of true beneficence.

More than that, if I find that a man's heart is supremely possessed of this divine spirit, I am no longer at liberty to ask him how he came by it. If it is there; if he loves God, and gives evidence of it; if he loves his fellowmen, and gives evidence of it, it does not make any difference, it must not make any difference to me, where he got it.

I think it better to have common schools by which to teach the population how to read; but if a man has never gone to the common school, and yet can read—is not reading the thing? I think that going to school is the best way of getting education; but then, suppose a man gets an education without going to school, is that not to be taken as sufficient? I think that if a man goes through a school course, a college course, a university course, he is better educated than if he does not; but here and there a man comes up, and acquires an education, and makes himself felt, without going through any such course; and are you to question whether he is educated or not because he acquired his education outside of institutions? Because institutions, on the whole, are best for the community, are you to deny that any man is educated who does not go through them?

Now, I hold that there are great fundamental doctrines of the divine government and the divine nature, that are blessed of God

for men's amelioration, for their good; but suppose I find a man who has all the effects which these doctrines are designed to work, wrought in him by other influences, without being technically connected with the doctrines, am I to say that I will not recognize him as a Christian? I say that the spirit of God in the heart of a man is all that we have a right to look for. It may be interesting to know by what process he arrived at the result; but we are to judge of him by his fruit. If a Universalist gives evidence of possessing the Spirit of God, his life is his voucher for his faith. And if he applies for admission into our church, he is to come in, not because he is a Universalist, but because he is God's; because he is Christ's.

"Yes," it is said, "but what are you going to do about the doctrine?" Nothing. "But suppose a man wants to come in as a Unitarian?" He could not come in as a Unitarian—not if I had my way. I would stand in the door, and would not let him in. But if he should say, "Sir, I am ten times as much a Christian as I am a Unitarian. "Ah! as a Christian," I would say, "you can come in, but not as anything else." No man can come in as a Swedenborgian; but he can as a Christian, no matter if he has the Swedenborgianism beside. A man may be a Christian, and yet be a Unitarian; and a man may be an orthodox man and not be a Christian. It is as long as it is broad. Some men are a great deal worse than their creed, and do not live half way up to it; and some men are a great deal better than their creed, and live far beyond it. Why is that? Because God employs more instruments in bringing up men than your church and Catechism. God has a church in father and mother; God has instrumentalities for saving men, not in ordinances and doctrines alone, but in the examples of holy men. Thousands of men in adversity and peril are helped by the illustrious lives of others, as no dogmas or ceremonies could help them. And the moment we see that a man has imbibed the true spirit of benevolence, we are to receive him, though we may reject his outward belief. We are to accept a man, not because he is one thing or another, so far as creeds are concerned, but because his life and disposition are right. A man whose heart is filled with love for God and his fellow-men has a right to stand in sweet fellowship with us.

But how can a man be a Christian who does not believe in Christ?

There is the puzzler. He cannot. But then, a man may believe in Christ who does not believe in Christ's name, using that name simply in its superficial meaning. Do we mean by *Christ* simply the letters that spell out that name? Is not *Christ* merely a name for certain qualities—for love, for purity, for truth, for a holy faith in and obedience to the Saviour and God? Is it not a name that sig-

nifies not simply beliefs, but succor of love, and self-denial of love? Is it not a name filled full of the sweetest and richest fruit of divine being? A man may believe in the thing which that name covers, who yet, from the force of prejudice and education, is unwilling to take the name itself. There is many a man who believes in Christ, only he will not call him by that name. He believes in God as he was manifested in Christ. He does not know much about the historical part of Christianity. He believes in that part in which the heart is concerned. He may not believe in theology; he may not accept all the dogmas in regard to days, and incarnation, and mediation, and passion, as they are framed into theology; but he has taken the spirit of Christ. And having taken that, he has taken Christ. If a man takes the spirit of Christ, it does not matter so much about the name. He takes Christ who takes his spirit.

Now, if you have not the spirit of Christ, go away. Do you say that you believe in the Trinity? Go away; your spirit is bad. Do you say that you believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—three Persons and one Godhead? Go away; you are filled with envyings and jealousies toward your neighbor. Do you say that you are sound on all the points of doctrine? Go away; you are, with all your theology, fierce and truculent and arrogant, and devoid of love toward God and man. You believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost? Yes, you believe in the outside of them, but you do not believe in the inside of them. You do not believe in that which makes them. It is not the alphabet that makes God. It is not the spelling certain letters that makes God. It is the eternal purity, the eternal sweetness, the eternal remedialness in the divine power and wisdom and justice, employed for the purposes of love—it is these that make God.

A man comes in and says, "I do not know much about these doctrines. I know very little about Christ. I do not believe that he is divine. But I believe that his spirit is to be mine." He believes that the spirit of Christ is gentleness, is sweetness, is forgiveness, is self-denial, is laboring for others, is the feeling which the tenderest mother experiences toward her child. He does not see his way to believe in the ordinary view of his divinity; but in the higher view of it he does believe. He thinks he does not, but he does. He deceives himself. He is misled by a juggle of words. For that which is Christ is the inner life of Christ; and that is what he does believe in. As to the power of registering it, and putting it in its place in a system of theology, it would be better if he had it; but that is not vitally important. If any man has the spirit of Christ, he is his. He *does* believe in him.

And so, what of your Unitarianism? It becomes a mere word, a simple name. I do not myself regard that doctrine as being a part of Christianity, or as being that in which it is desirable to educate people. If I did I should not be preaching as I do here. If I thought that to be the best doctrine, I should take it. But if a man has the spirit of Christ, I will not reject him because he holds that doctrine.

Therefore, if a person comes to me (and it would be all the better if there were twenty of them), and gives me his individual experience in his daily life, and gives evidence that he is walking in the spirit of Christ and in the enjoyment of the divine presence, I take him, because he does believe in the interior of God. He may not believe in the systematic and exterior views of the divine Being as you and I have classified them; but he takes the spirit which they are designed to set forth. And I say that the love of God in the soul should rise higher than ordinances, than dogmatic systems, than sects, than the products of human reason. I believe that Christianity should begin on the inside, and work outside, and not that it should stand outside and wait till it can go inside.

And so, all that are called of God, and respond to the call, and give token of true obedience to the Father; all that by sweet sympathy and self-denial and service give evidence that they love their fellow-men; all that hope in the mercy of God, and not in their own vain righteousness; all that show by their lives that they are in the fellowship of the whole invisible church of Christ in heaven and upon earth—all such are known in heaven, are named there, and are longed for there, and will certainly be found there.

May God grant us all to enter largely into the apostle's generous and noble utterance:

"Now, the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We thank thee, O God, that thou dost not accept us according to our merit. It is not the purity of our being, nor its greatness, that commends us to thee. Thou dost not measure us upon thine own self. It is our feebleness which excites thy pity. It is our unripeness which leads thee to shine upon us. It is our sin which makes thee a Saviour in heart, a Saviour in providence, and a Saviour in grace. For thy nature is to be generous—to be gracious. Thou art not indifferent to righteousness. That is dear to thee; for us it is dear to thee. Thou art not willing that we should be taken away from pain and suffering, only to abide as cripples in deformity. It is thy desire that we should be shaped by love, by goodness, by compassion, and, if need be, by fear and by force. Thou art sovereign, and thou dost mold the great universe which thou hast under thee, according to its necessities, working mightily in all things, and working in all things according to their special need, that thou mayest direct universal progress and growth toward perfection, toward righteousness, toward all godlikeness.

We rejoice that thou art supreme; that none can hinder thee; that only thyself art counsel to thyself; that only thine own strength is equal to thy strength. Thou, O God, the Father, Son, and Spirit, dwellest in unalloyed companionship of blessedness; and in thee are the roots of universal being; and in thee is the destiny of all. From thee comes all history; and back to thee report all the events of history. Thou art the beginning and the end—the *Alpha* and the *Omega*. In thee we live, and move, and have our being. And what such being as thine must be, who of us, from our diminished sphere, can rise to understand? Glimpses we have, which we interpret by the things that are good in ourselves; but the height, and the depth, and the length, and the breadth, of infinity—above all, the scope and continuity of thy being—who of us can fathom it? It is toward thyself that we are living, and for thyself that we are longing. All other knowledge fails and seems worthless, if we may but stand in Zion and before God, and see thee as thou art, and feel the blessedness of thy life. This is the sum of all desire and aspiration.

And now, O Lord! as thou hast been patient in days gone by, still be patient with us. Command all thy angels of mercy, that they bear an expression of the fullness of thy love to us. Speak to all that is in nature, that it may serve us as from the God of love. And we pray that we may thus, by thine instruments and by thy servants, be lifted up from stage to stage, from sphere to sphere, from glory to glory, until we stand in Zion and before God.

Listen to the inaudible sigh to-day. To-day listen to the unspoken messages of the heart. Behold the things which we do not see ourselves. Behold even the things which we do not not voluntarily show thee for fear or for shame. Naked and open must we be before Him with whom we have to do.

And grant unto every heart that is here, that succor, that assurance, that sympathy, that forgiving message of mercy, that inspiration of hope and of courage, which it needs. For some are sitting under the shadow. Thou art breaking over them great trouble. And yet, art not thou hid within the cloud that is round about them? We pray thee that they may not fear so much their outward trouble. Grant that they may have sensibility to the near approach of divine providence, and that they may have faith ministered to them to know that the hand that smites them is the hand that was pierced for them.

We pray that thou wilt be near to those that are in bereavements, and that are suffering acute anguish of heart. And when thy work hath had its way; when thou hast caused them to suffer enough, establish them through suffering in faith and in joy. We ask not so much that the thorns may be removed, as that thy grace may be sufficient for every sufferer.

Be with those that are full of trouble for others. Hast thou not known this burden, Lord Jesus? Hast thou not long enough carried the world in thy sympathy to understand and succor all those that by sympathy for others are burdened? And may they learn this lesson evermore. As thou didst carry the sorrows of men; as thou didst bear their sins; as their sicknesses were laid upon thee; as thou hast been the great Substitute and Nurse, bearing the world and all its creatures, even as the nurse bears the little child, so, O Lord! we beseech of thee that in our measure, and afar off, and in a diminished sphere, and with exceeding imperfection, we may in kind be like thee, and carry one another's burdens, and bear one another's infirmities, and carry one another's faults, and be patient with each other unto the end. May we long more for others than for ourselves; looking not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of another.

And we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those that have come up hither this morning to speak of thy mercies and of thy past kindnesses to them. May they not forget to give thanks who are blessed every day. May we not have a sense of need more than of thy bounty. May we seek more to see what God hath done for us, than to see that which we yet lack.

And we pray that thou wilt bless all families that are accustomed to meet with us in this congregation. If any are withheld from the place where they would be, may that place where they are be a sanctuary. And may the Spirit of God's love minister to every one of them. And we pray that the heavenly light may not be withheld from, but may abide upon every Christian family.

And we pray that thou wilt this morning remember those that are sick, and those that wait with the sick, and those that are absent from among us because they are bearing messages to the unsought and to the untaught. And remember those that are sent afar off on errands of thy providence. Grant that everywhere those whose hearts look wistfully this way to-day, may be satisfied from the sanctuary of the Spirit of God. Bear messages of mercy and of peace and of blessing to them.

We pray that thou wilt be with all, to-day, that shall preach the Gospel. May they be strong in body, and inspired of heart, to do the will of God and their duty toward men. We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt unite thy people more with the Spirit of love, and that charity may pervade the Church of Christ upon earth. And let not malign power have any more its abiding place in thy temple and sanctuary. May the Spirit of the Lord come, and pure love be developed out of the Church, that the world may begin to see the dawn of its summer. Let thy kingdom come, we pray thee, in all intelligence, in all knowledge, in all justice, in wise laws, in pure and upright magistrates, in national peace, in national kindnesses of good neighborhood. Bring to an end, by the power of the truth, and by the uprising nature of the whole human family, all superstition, and all misrule, and all oppression, and all wars, and all cruelties, and all those great disasters that so long have ravaged the world. Let thy kingdom, in which dwelleth righteousness, come, and thy will be done upon earth as it is in heaven.

We ask it for Christ Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt bless the word that has been spoken. May it be for edification. Forgive the error; forgive the misconception; forgive anything that is untoward and offensive to thy mind. Bring us into more perfect sympathy of love with thee. May we give evidence that we love God, in that we love the brethren. May we forget all differences. May we bear with each other's imperfections. And grant that there may at last come a day in which Love is God among men. May there come a day in which the hearts of thy people shall be filled with the spirit of charity. And, at last, wilt thou revive love in all the earth. And come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; for the whole earth doth wait for thee. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

SELF-CARE, AND CARE FOR OTHERS.

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."—PHIL. ii., 4.

There are two great principles which run through society; and all true prosperity in the individual and in society at large depends upon the coöperation of these seemingly antagonistic principles. The first is that of personal responsibility, and the second is that of social sympathy and social liability Every man is bound by the law of his being to seek his own good, primarily. Every man is bound by the law of his higher being to seek the good of others by that primary good which he has secured for himself. When it is commanded, therefore, that every man should "Mind his own business, working with his hands the thing that is good," we are not to say, "That is just what I always thought: let everybody take care of himself, and then the world will all be taken care of." For the apostle says, afterward, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the the things of others."

'Ah!" say some, "which of these is true?" Ah! say I, both of them. They are both principles fundamental and fruitful; but they are principles which, like diœcius trees, that, carrying the male blossoms on one tree, and the female blossoms on the other, require contiguity and interaction before the fruit can come.

It is only by taking care of one's own self thoroughly, and then just as thoroughly taking care of others' selves by that force which you have in yourself, that you can act consistently and harmoniously with the law of your own being—with the law of your own social habitation.

Every man, then, must have a primary care for himself, and for his own affairs. Every man must see to it that his own body is maintained in health. Every man must see, therefore, that it has food and warmth and raiment and shelter—that it has, in short, all those things which are necessary for a well-developed bodily condition.

Every man also should secure to himself a prosperity in his own

SUNDAY MORNING, Feb. 19, 1871. LESSON: MATT. VI., 19–34. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 218, 725, 1011.

affairs. Every man is in charge, first of certain things which belong to him in especial, which he is to think of, more than anybody else; which he is to think of before he thinks of anything else, and to discharge before he discharges any other duty. There are certain great primary duties that we owe to ourselves, of existence, and of sustenance, and of accumulation, mental, social and physical. We are to store up being, and we are to store up resources, and we are to store up strength, and affluence, wealth, if possible. Taking care of one's own central and individual self is good. It is right. It is the very preparation for a true benevolence.

It is dangerous to relax the responsibility of this self-care, even in charity. Next to the danger of not relieving those that are in need, is the danger of doing it. If you do not relieve those that are in great need, you yourself suffer. It is a bad thing for a man to shut up his heart. It is a bad thing for a man to form the habit of not communicating with those that are in necessity. It is better for a man, though he is oftentimes deceived in the objects of his charity, to let the stream run so that it shall not be choked up nor obstructed. But next to the damage which you do to yourself by not being charitable, is the damage which you are liable to do to others by being charitable. It is the most dangerous thing in the world to help a man. So that you help him in a way to make him more powerful to take care of himself, succor is no mischief. But the charity which men administer, for the most part, is so administered as to relieve the object of it in some degree of the pressure of this great law which rests on every man to take of himself. It is the most dangerous thing that you can do, to cut the cord of self-responsibility, and to make men feel that they can be helped; that they do not need to exert themselves; that there are no thorns against which they will fall if they are indolent. The pressure of God's providence and God's law is to make men stand up independently and take care of themselves, and when they fail by sickness, weakness and overthrow, still to administer to them succor. It is one of the most delicate things in the world, so to succor men as not to destroy them. Of course, there will be a residuum in a household, or in a community, that are past self-help; and they are the true objects of charity. And yet, even among the sick and poor there should be a spirit of self-reliance cherished assiduously. For when a man has no idea of taking care of himself, he lacks the very essential element of manhood. We are to bring up our children in this way. We are to bring them up so that they shall have self-respect; so that they shall have a spirit of care. But of this more, further on.

This primary regard for our own existence, and for our own

prosperity, is not, however, the only principle which is at work, and which we have to take time to consult. We are not solitary in this life. We are social. Although our neighbors are not in one sense a part of ourselves, as our separate members or limbs are a part of our body; yet, in another sense they are a part of us. It would be impossible for a man to live in solitude, and exercise all the faculties of his mind. Many of our faculties imply correlated existences; and we could not employ them and develop them if we were shut off from all society. Our association with others is a condition of education; it is a condition of development; it is a condition of happiness. Therefore it is that to attempt to reform men who have been criminals by shutting them off from society, is to attempt to reform them by denying them one of the fundamental laws of their structure and of God's administration. It is unnatural, barbarous, pernicious!

We have duties to others, as much as to ourselves. We are as much bound to take care of others as to take care of ourselves. In the sphere of benevolence, we are to look first to our own development and strengthening; and then we are just as really, though perhaps not in as great a degree in all cases, to look to the development and strengthening of others. The law is, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." *As*, there, does not carry the force of quantity, but of quality. Our affection for our neighbors is to be as disinterested and as real as our affection for ourselves. That which we give to them is not to be a low and empty feeling. It is to be large and generous—the same as the love that we give to ourselves. It is not meant that we are to think as much for our neighbors as for ourselves; but we are to love our neighbors, all of them; and our affection for them is to be as disinterested as that affection which we feel toward our own selves.

This doctrine does not allow men to neglect their affairs for the sake of pretentious benevolence. There are many who seek a fugitive excitement; who seek praise, perhaps; who indulge a patronizing pride, it may be, in a perpetual attempt to take care of everybody *but* themselves. They may be appointed as father and mother in the household; and then their sphere is there, and there they must serve God, and there they must serve society. He who rears and cares for a Christian household is laboring for an institution than which society has none more precious and more necessary.

But there are many who reverse the order. Your duty is first to your household; and then so much of strength and time as you have after your duty to your household is performed, is to be given to the community. You are to begin with those next to you; and

gradually the sphere is to grow larger and larger. That is the natural order. But there are many who first take care of the community, and then go home with the scraps of their time and take care of the family. There are many who are seized with an infernal spirit of usefulness. They are not well spoken of by the apostle. He calls them "Busy-bodies in other men's matters." Persons, they are, who are incessantly running hither and thither. They rise early and sit up late, that they may attend to this or that matter of public interest. They lay aside home duties for the sake of performing duties that are outside of home. They are too much occupied with the affairs of some church or some society to commune with their children. There is no quiet, no rest, with them. For there is this visit to make, or that committee to meet. They are working for the community. They are like shuttles, incessantly carrying busy-bodies' thread, up and down, back and forth, from side to side. They are smitten, as they think, by duty.

Now, there is no such thing as this encouraged in the word of God; and no man can say, "Look not every man on his own things, but also on the things of others," and make that an excuse for neglecting home duties. Whatever else you neglect, do not neglect self, and the branching of self into the household. That is normal. That is the very road to benevolence. Take care of home. Make home strong, beautiful, rich, happy; and then let home overflow. Blessed are they who get the light, and the example, the succor which come from a home-heart filled up with the measure of duty, and that then, in the strength that it has derived from home as a center, radiates and carries intelligence and sympathy and succor to those who need it outside. First gain power at home. Be stronger there than anywhere else. Be more faithful there than anywhere else. Make home, as it were, an armory. Make it as a heavenly garden. And then take the fruit and the flowers that you have raised there, and bear them forth to those that are outside. So you will have something to carry that will be worth carrying.

Still less is it the spirit of this injunction to look after others' welfare and not our own simply, when properly rendered, to encourage impertinent prying, and curiosity, and meddling, and advice-giving in the affairs of others. There are many persons who are atmospheric popes. They in some sense distribute themselves like a malaria over the whole community. They go everywhere, looking after somebody or other. It is not that they are wiser or better than others; but they seem to have an insane notion that they must see everything that is out of order, and make suggestions here,

and give advice there, and make inquiry yonder. They run from one to another, with incessant clatter, offering advice which is cheap to give, but dear to take. And they fill up the round of their useless lives in this meddlesome spirit. God abhors them, and the devil loves them. Mischief-makers they are—inevitable mischief-makers.

Let men give succor when succor calls. Let men give counsel sparingly, even when counsel is asked. Let men intrude nothing of themselves upon those who do not need intrusion. All prying impertinences; all officious inquests; all walkings up and down with a kind of authority among men, as if you were better than they, or competent to instruct them—these things are foreign, I will not say to Christianity alone, but to common sense, on which all true Christianity must be built.

The two principles of self-care, and benevolence, or care of others, where they are coördinated, work together in perfect harmony. Each restrains the other. Each makes the other fruitful. A wise care for one's self makes it necessary that you should think for others. You cannot take care of yourself wisely without it. A wise sympathy for others' affairs can be most profitably shown by those who have first taken care of themselves. If you desire to be benevolent, you must look on your own affairs. If you desire to be thorough in your own affairs, you must look on others' affairs. Do both. Take care of individual duty, and also of social duty. Let them be coördinated, and work together. Neither can go alone. They are reciprocal. They are auxiliaries one of the other. No man can be so busy, ordinarily, that he has not some time to think of other people. Because there are some people who are continually running up and down through the community and thinking only of others' affairs, is no reason why you should go to the opposite extreme, and never think of others' affairs. Because some persons are all the time running after committees, and sewing circles, and consultation meetings, and visitations, and their footsteps are rarer on their own threshold than on others', is no reason why you should be a nun or a monk. Their mistake does not justify yours. Their extreme does not justify your rebound to the other extreme. There is to be temperateness on one side and on the other. You are to care for others; and yet you are not to care for others to such a degree that you shall neglect to care for yourself. You are to care for yourself; and yet not to such a degree that you shall neglect to care for others. No man is selfish whose benevolence promotes his own interest. No man is wise in self-interest who does not make his prosperity that of others.

We may examine this truth briefly in its relations to individuals, to neighborhoods, to sections of a country and to nations; and I propose to examine it in every one of these points.

I. In regard to the individual. While every man should mind his own business shrewdly and skillfully, he should not do it exclusively and selfishly. The man who thinks only of himself, cheats himself. He narrows his sphere. He prevents the development in himself of those sympathies which are like quills in the wing. He weakens his power, on the whole, though he may intensify his power in special things. Exclusive thought of yourself, and of your own plans, and your own prosperity, will at last produce friction, and collision, and rivalry, and opposition. And a man finds his way growing harder and harder, the more selfish he is. If a man makes his prosperity always work for the good of his neighbors, at last when it is found out that he is seeking others' welfare as well as his own, all men want him to advance, and they help him, and reward him; but when a man lives simply for himself, when a man is nothing but a magnified augur, and is cutting into the substance of the community, boring his way steadily and by force, the further he goes in, the harder it is for him to turn round. Friction and opposition meet him at every step. And selfishness at last receives its own punishment. No man is more cheated than the selfish man. Selfishness takes away much enjoyment, and finally wrecks men in old age. And often when they are successful in outward things, and endowed with prosperity, they are unhappy. Nothing is more common than to see men who have succeeded in the ambition of power or wealth discontented.

In old age many men begin, in an awkward and mechanical way, to practice acts of generosity without being generous, and acts of kindness without being kind. These traits should be carried along with a man's business, if they are to exist in his disposition at the close of a business career. But many a man makes his business as hard as iron. Every part of his plan is law. And while he is engaged in accumulating wealth, and his mind is keyed up with an ambition to become richer, he experiences a measure of satisfaction. But after he has achieved prosperity, and got a million, or two millions, or three millions, he begins to say, "Ah! what is the end of it?" A man very soon comes to the end of all the money that he can use with any profit. Then comes the simple ambition of acquiring money; and that is very thin and vaporous. And the man says, "Is it not time for me to begin to enjoy my wealth?" He wants to enjoy it. And sometimes he seeks to get comfort out

of it by making a posthumous bequest, saying, "I will hold on to it as long as I can; but I will take comfort from the thought that I have provided in my will for the erection of that building." Others in old age begin to bestow their goods to feed the poor; and if they give them in generosity they will enjoy more at the end of life than they did at the beginning; but after men have trained themselves to a selfish method of administering their wealth, that selfishness has taken hold of them, and all that they give away is only another form of selfishness, so far as they themselves are concerned. The community may derive benefit from it, but they will not be much benefited by it.

It is very dangerous for a man to think only of himself—very dangerous, I mean, to *him*. You may prosper outwardly; but what means prosperity in this world? It means a home made happy. It means the education of the whole being. It means the building a man up so that he has enjoyment in all parts of his nature in its proper force. If a man limits his thoughts to himself, he seals up all the cells from which honey is to come. There are few faculties that are not dead in him. And when he comes to old age, he may have a few branches that have green leaves on them, but the tree at large is dead, and so is fruitless.

I see men in New York (none in Brooklyn!) who are repeating, with golden bricks, the old story which is told of an Italian noble. It is said that he placed a woman in a little niche just large enough for her to stand in, and that by the masons a row of bricks was laid, and that thus begun, a wall encircling her rose steadily up, and up, until finally, when the last brick was laid, she was left standing in her living tomb. It is a horrible story. Very likely it is true; for they sought horror ingeniously then. But it is not half as horrible as what I see going on in New York perpetually. New York men take golden bricks, and lay a circle round them, and the wall rises, first up to their knees, and then up to their breast; and then up to their neck, leaving their head peering above the golden bricks. And little by little, circle by circle, the wall still rises, until by and by there is only a small orifice above their head. And at last the top brick is laid on, and that orifice is closed, and the man smothers behind his golden bricks. All the man that was in him is dead.

We hear some of these men faintly cry out, murmuring. They have thought of themselves until there is only that one single chord that sounds in them. And there is not one of God's angels in heaven, nor in all the distribution of spirits through the air, that loves to play on one chord, and that selfihness. There is no music in it. It makes a good bass when a man raises a whole scale above it; but alone it is harsh and stridulous.

A wise benevolence should proceed from a good solid center. You should take care of yourself. You should be an organized business man; but you should be an organized *man* anyhow. Your own self should be made strong and sharp and active; for you are to build a foundation on which you can get leverage. You are to create, round about you, you yourself, as it were, being an anvil and forge, that which you shall use in a higher sphere for beneficence. First, self. That is the lowest foundation. But you stand on it. And by and by sympathy and benevolence will begin to expand; and you will have something by which to go into the sphere of helpfulness and activity to others.

The apostle, therefore, speaking of the lazy man that stole, says:

"Let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

That is the object of working for yourself. Take care of yourself, and then you will have something to give to other folks. That is the motive for working for yourself.

A benevolent squandering, therefore, brings frugality to contempt. As there are those who are "busy-bodies in other men's matters" socially, so we frequently see in society persons who practice a kind of indiscriminate, unwise, unorganized, profligate benevolence. We see persons who take no care of their business; who do not keep any proportion between capital and receipt; who are careless of watchfulness and frugality. They are too kind. They trust every one. They cannot collect that which is due to them. They are so busy with others' business that their own business suffers. That is not true benevolence. It is a squandering of benevolence. Every man's center should be a working center where the law of sympathy resides. Every man should be strong in himself; every man should be fully equipped; and then when he goes into the sphere and work of benevolence he is worth something. Otherwise, he is careless, smiling, aimless, tottling. A man that lets everything slip through his fingers—what purpose does he serve, in running through his little means, but to set an example which stingy men plead for their stinginess? Do they not point at him, and say, "There is one of your benevolent men! When I began business in this town, that man was one of the most prosperous men in the village; and now where is he? What is benevolence worth?" They deride it. But this is benevolence run mad. It is not true benevolence.

There is truth, therefore, in the proverb, "Charity begins at home," whether it begins at the store or at the house. A man that gives away all his seed-corn in the spring will beg in the autumn. A

man that gives away all his time and strength outside of home will have no home. A man that gives away all his time and strength outside of his business affairs will very soon be bankrupt or thriftless. And it ought to be understood that the condition of power in benevolence is that it shall come by a man's taking care of himself. And then it should be understood (and with emphasis, too) that when a man has become strong by taking care of himself, he shall use his power for the benefit of his fellow men. When a man has become rich in substance, let him employ that substance for some purpose of good to others. God says to rich men, "Be rich in good works." If you have organized wealth, use it; and the law of using it is the law of social sympathy and the law of benevolence.

2. This law of self-care and of care for others, coördinate and harmonious, is indispensable to the prosperity of a neighborhood. Every man should have his own center, and his own private success. Independence is a matter which should be bred in us by religion and by the whole instruction of the household. We ought to bring up our children to ask as little as possible, and to give as much as possible. We ought to bring up our children to depend upon their own resources, and never to ask a question if they can find out by teasing their own brains; and never to let any question go unsolved, when, if they cannot solve it themselves, they can get it solved by asking questions. Ask, but ask as little as possible, should be the rule. We ought to bring up our children to despise charity, except that which comes out of their own hands. Take nothing from any man if you can avoid it. Be high-minded. Even service of a personal kind be not too ready to receive. Give an equivalent for all that you receive. Deal with others, not in a spirit of bargaining, but in the spirit of honorable pride. There is such a thing as Christian honor; and there is nothing about which it should be more sensitive than this of receiving from others that which you should have the power yourself to originate or to take. Bring up your children to be cheerful, to be brave, to be prosperous, having no other thought of life but this: "That which I can gain myself I will gain; but that which I cannot gain I will do without. I can afford to be poor, but I cannot afford to be a pauper." There is a law of manhood which is more important than all the external adjuvants of life; and it is our business to make this felt more. You can scarcely intensify it too much.

But if you teach this only to your children, you will teach them to be hard and stingy and unhappy. You must go further than that. For when you have made them independent, self-reliant, industrious, enterprising, fruitful, safe, you must teach them that they are not to use all their life-force upon themselves, but that their neighbors, and the

neighborhood, whether it be a country neighborhood, or a village, or a town, or city, are to be benefitted by it. Teach them to do in a larger sphere what they have done in a smaller. Benevolence must be combined with private integrity, and private industry. The consideration of public welfare should be a part, then, of the attention which our children should receive at home, and a part, also, of the instruction which they should receive in the church. In every community there are elements of great moment to each citizen which yet do not come exactly within the sphere of any one man's duty. There are besides the things which each man does for himself, and within his own house, and within his own grounds, many things which are common to all; and the right-doing of things which are common to all, is what we mean by *public spirit.*

Now, every man should cheerfully and gratefully—not grudgingly—work for the community in which he lives. It is a shame for a man to have a good farm and a bad road in front of it. It is a shame for a man to have beautiful grounds and an opaque fence surrounding them. It is a shame for a man to stay at home and rear his own prosperity there, and encircle himself with beauty and affluence, saying, "I am provided for, and I do not care for others. Things may go up or down, for all of me. I am independent of the town in which I live." You are a part of it; and it belongs to you to help build it up, and not to build up yourself within your own lines exclusively. There are many persons who feel that what the town gets from them is so much that they have lost. It is not so. It is so much that they have gained, rather. There are many men who are apparently so selfish and so self-seeking and so centripetal that they begrudge their taxes, the service that they are called upon to render in the working of the roads, and every thing that they do, or have to do, for the public. I think that they are mad when they see their neighbors' bees going off thigh-loaded from their flowers. I think that if they could, they would conceal the perfume from their grape-vines in summer when they are in blossom, so inclined are they to shirk from doing anything for the welfare of others.

It is the business of every man to see to it that the whole neighborhood or community in which he dwells is wholesome. Is there malaria springing from some undrained morass in the neighborhood? All the people should come together, according to their several abilities, and take hold of hands, and labor as one man to secure the general health. And if a man is lifted up on some hill so that he is beyond the reach of danger, it is a shame for him to say, "The air is pure here; it is healthy here: if you down there are sick from malaria, drain your own swamps. Why should I drain them?"

Because, you ought to work for the public good as well as for your own. A man who dwells upon a hill, and will not go down and help his neighbors under such circumstances, is not half a man—and it is the worst half, at that. There are men who see travelers go past their premises day after day, weary and worn; and yet they will not spend five dollars to set out shade trees on either side of the road. They say, "If travelers want shade-trees, let them set them out themselves." It would be a revolution for rich men to propose a park, or a common ground, for the people at large. The rich man says, "I have all the grounds that I want." Well, provide grounds for the poor, then. "Oh! The poor must take care of themselves. I am not going to take care of all the poor in the community."

People disown their obligations to the commonwealth; and yet, they are just as important, and they are just as binding, and they are on a higher plane, or in a higher sphere, than their obligations to themselves. I have justified you, I have defended you in taking care of yourselves; and now I charge upon you, also, that you are just as much bound, with a higher moral obligation (that is, with an obligation which is higher in quality), to take care of others as well as yourselves.

It is a shame for a village to be treeless, and to be without ample accommodations both for foot-passengers and for beasts. It is a shame for a village to let stinginess prevent the securing of ample supplies of water for all. They that are best off in regard to all the conditions which are required for health in a community should be first and foremost in providing them for the whole community. God has raised them up, and taken the necessity of these things from them. Let them, therefore, with a large disinterestedness, secure them to those who need them.

I recollect the story of a man who spent his whole life in making money for the sake of doing good with it. I admire his noble ambition, but I do not justify the mode which he adopted for carrying it out. He was very industrious, and amassed a great deal of money. He had the reputation of being avaricious and stingy. And yet, when he died it was found that his whole life had been dedicated to accumulating property that he might build an acqueduct that should bear the water of a stream from a distant mountain, and empty it for evermore into a fountain in a village, so that the poor, who had always suffered from lack of water, should be supplied with it. And then he became a benefactor. And after his death people cried who had cursed him while living.

Every man is to be praised for performing a generous act; but no man has a right to do a good thing in a stingy and ugly way.

This man was not justified in the course he pursued; but to devote his whole life to procuring the means of supplying the wants of future generations was a noble thing in him.

In general, there are a few in every community who are obliged to do the things which are for the common good. The work of a church is done by a dozen, or half-dozen. They work excessively—more than they ought to. The rest all lie still and let them. That which is done in any church, if distributed evenly among the members according to their several capacities and measures, would be light upon all. Yea, it might be multiplied four-fold and yet be light upon all. The money which is given in this church for charitable purposes, if divided among all that are here, in proportion to their means, would scarcely be recognized or felt. It might be doubled and quintupled, and still it would not be felt, if the burden were evenly distributed—if men felt that they were under obligation, not simply to take care of themselves, but to take care of others also, as a part of their duty to God and to humanity.

Hence, not only the wickedness but the folly of men who grudge contributions to the public. I do not know as I ought to speak on this subject, because it will really hit the sins of people in Brooklyn! There are, I am told, men in Brooklyn who do not like to pay their taxes. I am told that they evade. I am told that they pay their taxes very grudgingly. I am told that they hide property. I am told that they depreciate the value of property in the eyes of those who are to assess them. I am told that they even tell lies—which I cannot believe! But there are men who make it a study how to get their shoulder out from under that part of the burden which consists in caring for the community. If a man could justify himself for this by a sufficient reason, there might be some extenuation; but there is no such reason. A man may say, "I do not think it right for me to pay for all the rumshops that exist throughout the community. I do not think that I ought to be taxed for gambling-saloons, and all manner of license, and vice, and crime. I do not think that I, who am a hard-working, painstaking, virtuous man, and a member of the church withal, ought to bear the burden of this great debt which is caused by bad men." But that is the law of life, and always has been, and always will be. Good folks have to pay for the wrongs committed by the bad. Therefore, a man cannot justify himself on that ground. A man might say, "I would pay my taxes cheerfully if I thought that what I paid went to benefit the community; but when I think that the greatest portion of it goes to feed a parcel of base cormorants, I do begrudge it." Well, I give it up: that is a justifying reason. If I thought that every gold arrow

that I shot hit the mark, I would be willing to shoot many out of my quiver; but when I think that about five parts out of ten go to feed stealing selfishness, I myself grumble a little, and feel that it is rather hard. I curse that selfishness which is perpetually making good men, even, unwilling to be public-spirited. I denounce that whole system of laxity of conscience, in the administration of the affairs in the community, which men practice, and which you tolerate almost without murmur or reproach, and which acts back upon the whole moral sense, and leavès men still, like moths, to cut the thread of the commonwealth.

One of the abominations of public dishonesties is, not so much that they take away money, as that they take away manhood; as that they take away conscience; as that they take away public spirit, and quash and destroy it.

The curse of charity, to-day, at my door, is that I think every other man, yes, that four out of five, are impostors. My hand does not want to go out as once it did, because so much of charity is but paying a premium on vice and impudence.

The curse of public-spiritedness is that men do not believe that the money which they pay for taxes, and for charity itself, goes to make the park beautiful, or the streets light, or the sewers wholesome, or the community wise and good and strong, in schools and other civie institutions. But you, and I, and everybody, owe it to ourselves not to draw back from our duty. It is better to give a thousand dollars where only five hundred are due, than to form an intense selfishness which shall lead you to say, "Let the community go: I will take care of myself."

3. This subject should also be applied to the sections of the country in which we live. The necessity is beginning to appear. It has shown itself already in certain ways so distinctly as to make it a matter for Christian instruction. There needs to be instruction respecting it throughout the length and breadth of this land, there is such a vast range of it, present and prospective. For, without doubt, a mighty stream shall overflow our banks, and the country shall extend from the Pacific to the Atlantic, and from the extreme North to the extreme South. And with such diversity of climate, and such diversity of resources, it is better fitted by its conditions for intercommunion and reciprocity than almost any other country. And yet, if men mistake, and are narrow-minded, there will spring up sectional selfishness, and sectional conflicts.

Now, the prosperity of the whole nation is a benefit to every several part of the nation. You cannot make the entire people wise, intelligent, skillful, strong, brave and prosperous, and not

make every section of the nation, whether east, west, north or south, more intelligent, more skillful, stronger, better, and wiser. Old New England, when she thinks for herself, cannot think for herself. She thinks for every thing that there is on the continent. Whatever wise law she makes reverberates to the very Pacific. Whatever noble example her sons set, shines throughout all the land. She cannot act for herself: she acts for the whole. Whatever is done wisely and well in one part, is a benefit to all the parts. To build up the West at the expense of the East, is to build it up at the expense of the West, by and by. And so of the East. When you attempt to fortify any section at the expense of any other section, you cheat yourself. That which is best for all, will, in the long run, be found to be best for each section. Though it may not seem so, yet in the end it will be found to have been so.

This is a principle that is radical to our national existence. This is a feeling that should be cultivated more and more. It should be cultivated more in the family, and it should be cultivated more in the church. The church, like the family, can speak and act disinterestedly. Parties, often, are tongue-tied in these things. Commerce, while it is generous in many respects, is apt to be narrow and selfish in this matter. And it is for us to see that this law holds good in sections of the nation.

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the the things of others."

New England, in legislating for the Atlantic slope, must not think of the Atlantic slope alone. The Southern States must not legislate and work for the Southern States. The West must take care of the West; but in taking care of the West she must so take care of it that others shall be cared for.

"Say to the South—Give up thy charge,
And keep not back, O North."

Let all stand together, a vast, outspread domain of free and intelligent men, inspired by the true Christian spirit of indomitable self-care and independence; and then let there be a prolific, widespread public care and thought for the commonwealth.

4. The life of nations proceeds upon modifications of the same great laws which govern individuals. It takes a long time to work out results in national life, because it is so much more multitudinous than any individual or family life. But at length precisely the same moral laws and economic laws which govern on the great scale, must govern on the individual scale. Nations, I think, are to treat each other as individuals treat each other. Precisely the same law of obligation is binding upon nations that is binding upon individuals. Let each one take care of himself; but let him do it so as all the

time to accumulate strength by which to extend something of sympathy and help to those around about. The law of nations should be a law of interaction and service.

How well they pick their banners! Our banner—what is it? The ugliest bird of prey that flies in the air. We have, to signify our moral qualities, rapacity built on power. The nation from which we descended have for their banner, on a bloody field, a rampant lion—the ugliest beast of the forest, that steals between day and night to eat all that is not too strong for him. Other nations have double-headed eagles, and others thistles. It is sought to express the aptitudes of nations by some animal of forceful, cruel, rapacious instinct or aptitude!

National life should be benevolent life. And there is a sympathetic impulse growing up in nations one toward another. The whole round world is coming nearer to every part of itself. Each part is coming nearer to every other part. The long voyages which once separated us have ceased. Knowledge is traveling faster than once it did. There is intercommunion by electric wires which run round the globe. So that we are near neighbors; and the earth is hardly larger than the page of a book as compared with what it was a hundred years ago. And this law, which we could scarcely feel when we were so widely separated, now, within hardly a lifetime, has come to be felt. Organizations are so complete, and intercommunication is so rapid, that we are obliged to think, and the strong nations of the earth must ere long think, what is to become of the weak nations.

Because you are built up by Christianity, have you a right to be more savage than heathenism? Because your industry needs the help of Oriental nations, have you a right to tread them out? Have they no rights which you are bound to respect, because God has made you more strong and prosperous than they? Where came this prosperity and this strength that is made the argument of oppression?

By as much as we are superior to the weak nations around us, by so much we owe to them our sympathy and aid. It is a poor employment of civilization that makes men more severe, more cruel, more destroying. And yet, where does the edge of a civilized nation touch upon a poor people—some Indian tribe, or some uneducated nation—that it does not corrode?

Nations are first to secure their own autonomy, and then they are, in their prosperity, to reach out kindly hands, and extend prosperity to those around about them. For, as in a neighborhood, the prosperity of the family depends upon the general prosperity; as in

a nation the prosperity of each section depends upon the prosperity of the whole commonwealth; so the prosperity of each nation on the globe depends in part upon the prosperity of the nations which surround it. That spirit by which we seek to build ourselves up by pulling down another nation; that spirit of fierce rivalry which means destruction to the weaker party, is contrary to the Gospel spirit and to political economy.

When the time comes that nations shall make war no more; when the time comes that men shall regard their neighbors, not as natural enemies, but as brethren; when the time comes that the whole population of society is free and intelligent; when the man of the loom, and the man of the plow, and the man of the hammer and the ax and the saw, shall have an interest in the public welfare and policy; when the common people shall speak, and not dynasties, and not narrow classes—then we may believe that nations will be reluctant to go to war against nations; and that wealth, like a kindly stream of sympathy will flow like a river of God through the earth, and that men will rejoice to build up all their fellow-men, differently named though they be, though they speak different languages, and though they be far from them.

And this time is drawing nearer and nearer. The providence of God is pointing and traveling in that direction. Even in my lifetime a new leaf has been turned over. Once nations fought, and neighboring nations stood and looked on, and were as little affected as brutal gamblers are while standing and looking on at a cock-fight or a bull-fight. But nations have changed in that regard. A new feeling is at work in the affairs of men. There is a better and a diviner feeling moving among nations. All nations are beginning to pity nations that are in distress. Do we hear that even in China there is starvation? Though they are so far away, our heart begins to move toward that nation. Do we hear that in any distant part of the earth some huge famine, some terrific pestilence, some devastating freshet has swept whole neighborhoods into poverty and misery? Succor begins to flow first from those nearest, and then from those more remote, in due order. Among the hitherward nations—those with whom we are more in contiguity, and whose sympathy is with ours—kindly offices have ceased to be exceptional things. When Ireland hungered, America fed her, as did Great Britain, on the other side of the water. When Europe, in any of her members, suffers, all the rest of Europe is attent, and listens to the cry that comes up from the suffering.

To-day, what do we behold? Fifty years ago, and a little more, that great, proud, ruthless and unprincipled hero, Napoleon, brought

down on the Germans famine, poverty and suffering, at Berlin; and to-day, in consonance with that retribution which goes with nations as with individuals, William stands treading down France, sovereign, imperial; and all his path smokes. The fires ascend from hamlets and from villages. And now, again, as in all the rest of the history of the world, the great men commit the crimes, and the innocent suffer the penalties. Not they that legislate ambitiously are the sufferers. Not they that carry on the war, but the peasant, the helpless mother and wife, the little children, go without bread and go with tattered raiment, and die in the very heart of beautiful France. Hollow-hearted corruption has sat on the throne and warred with Germany.

I adjudicate in the case of neither of these nations; but if one year ago I had been asked to point to that nation whose resources seemed to be the most ample, and whose prosperity seemed to be without let or hindrance, I should have said, "France is the strongest—the most militarily strong, at any rate;" and God lifted his hand and smote her, and behold in an hour she is desolate. She is absolutely sitting as the "Daughter of Zion," upon the ground disheveled, in ashes, and in utter and abject humiliation. The shears are already cutting off her territorial kingdom on the east. Already the tax-gatherer is collecting her wealth. Already famine stalks through her cities and villages. Her great men are scattered. Her citizens are despoiled and wretched. There has not been, in your age nor in mine, nor within a hundred years, a spectacle of such abject suffering, brought upon so large a people, as that which has come with this tornado of war.

Do I blame Germany? I do not. She, too, is a sufferer. There is mourning in all her houses. Multitudes of her sons go back no more. Many a book has been shut for the last time by scholarly hands in Germany. Many a one that was drawing God's secrets from among the stars will never look through glass again. Her universities are emptied. Her noblest sons have spilled their blood, as our noblest sons spilled theirs in our late struggle, and have met the same fate, the divine beneficence of which God shall by and by reveal to us. But though, in resisting the imperious and unjust aggressions of France, she suffers; yet, as the scene of the conflict is on the fields of France, she does not suffer as France now suffers. Her wounded are in beautiful cities. Her granaries are full. Her treasury is full. Her resources are organized. Her government is competent to take care of its people. Every drop of our old Germanic blood cries out, "God bless our father-land!"

But there is a voice of pity and of sorrow that cries out, "God

spare and have compassion upon poor France." The prairies lifted up their hands all summer, and the corn grew, and we knew not what it meant. But now we know that it was designed to be an instrument of charity, as we see it make haste to depart and travel across the deep to feed starving mouths. Our orchards and our wheat-fields yielded abundant harvests last year. Our anvils and mills sped prosperously last year. We are strong. Our hands are full. And that is not all—we are charitable.

And France—she is bone of our bone, and blood of our blood. On many a southward field sleep heroes born on French soil, who laid down their lives to achieve our independence. The name of Lafayette is sacred. It is second to no other than that of Washington itself. We are bound to France by the ties which bind all nations one to another. We are bound to France by that great law of humanity, which forbids that we see suffering without making haste to relieve it. We are bound to France by the memory of the services which she rendered to us in the hour of our extremest need. She heard our birth-cry; she took us up when we were weak and helpless; she cleansed us; she clothed us; she suckled us. And now that we have grown strong, and she is crippled and decrepit, shall we hear her voice imploring, "Come over and help me!" and not heed it? No. We have the spirit of men and brethren, and our willing hands shall give a response to this cry.

I have so made the sermon this morning that I might bring it out to this issue and result. I have been requested, as all the clergymen of Brooklyn have, to call attention to the want of France, to make mention of her perishing condition, in order to take up a collection that should be sent as a testimony of our sympathy and our beneficence over the sea.

You, that never heard a cry of suffering in vain; you, that in old days, when your names were a by-word and a hissing at the South, sent your hundreds and thousands of dollars to relieve the distressed in Norfolk; you that sent your gold to the people of New Orleans at a time when they despised you, and when your name was opprobrious—shall you be wanting, in this day, and in a more welcome service? Your old generosity I believe has not grown decrepit, and I believe that you will make a contribution now, I will not say that is worthy of your name (that would be presenting a low motive), but that is worthy of our humanity, of our Christian sympathy, and of our sense of that obligation which one nation owes to another.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We thank thee, O Lord our God! that through the pathless way, untrod, without mark, thou hast so often taken us that we are familiar with the road. We know not where thou art, as men judge; we know not what thou art. In part we know thee insomuch as we have something of our Father in us, and the child that is in us cries out unto thee; and yet, thou art so much more than that, and hast so much in thyself that transcends all conception, that by searching we never can find thee out. But by thy power thou seemest to us as one near and well known. And thy love and thy grace have made us love thee again. We do not send our thoughts as flowers send their fragrance into the air that comes not back unto them. We do not send our thoughts out to wander. We commune—yea, without voice, without answer; and yet we have learned to feel that thou art near to us, and that we are near to thee. There is something that thinks of us; something that enfolds us—though not by an arm such as that with which we enfold one another. Thine arm is creation. Thy thought is Providence. Thy heart is love. How does it give to us atmosphere and light and warmth! And because thou art greater, we lose thee. Because we seek to reduce thee to the proportion of our own form, and to the exigencies of our narrowed and confined life, we do not realize how present thou art. How necessary to us is thy very life! For in thee we live and move and have our being. We thank thee that we have learned so much. Not only when we are in distress do we call unto thee; not only when all our own strength and skill fail, do we send forth a vague cry for help; but in the watches of the night, and in the solitary times of the day—in the hours when the earth cannot satisfy us, and in the hours when it does satisfy us. In times of joy; in times of gratitude; in all times of peace and hope; in all times of pain and sorrow, thou art needed by us; and we feel after thee, and find thee. Sometimes thou art seemingly away; sometimes thou seemest to hide; but yet we are in thy pavilion. The storm passes, and we hear its terrible steps; and yet there we are protected, and safe, and brought forth again into light. And we have learned to hide our life with Christ in God. And we dwell not unconscious of our unworthiness. Yea, we grow more and more conscious of our unworthiness as we grow in days and years. We have learned to experience a sweet companionship with thee; and we rejoice in thy ineffable grace. We commit ourselves, dear Father, to thy paternal care to-day. We need not confess our sin. We open our life before thee; and thou readest it. Even as outward things are discerned by the stars of the darkest night, so thou discernest the most hidden things by the light that is in thee, and not in them. And we rejoice that thou knowest us altogether. Thou wilt not therefore be surprised at fresh transgressions; at the outbreaking of sin. Thou hast taken us with a knowledge of our weakness, and with a full knowledge of our wickedness; and thou knowest how we shall be tempted, and how we shall fall. All things are naked and open before Him with whom we have to do. And so thou hast set thy seal upon that blessed exhortation, Come thou boldly unto the throne of grace, that thou mayest obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. We need thee to-day We need thee in our understandings. We need thee in our affections. We need thee in all the parts and passages of our life. We need thee at home. We need thee by the wayside. We need thee in solitude, and in thick companies. We need thee in the sanctuary. We need thee in the perplexities of our daily business, and in our temptations. We need thee when we are ill at ease. We need thee waking or sleeping. Everywhere we need thee, O, thou Spirit of love, and of providence, and of care! And we commit ourselves now to thine hands, without condition. We run to thee as children run to us, not stopping to ask why, but

drawn. And we rejoice that thou wilt not put any away, nor let them count their worth. Thou wilt measure thy kindnesses according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, and not according to their deserts.

And now, we pray that thou wilt draw to thyself, by thy love and goodness, those that have been so far from thee, and that are so far from thee, Awaken a new life in all that are in darkness. Give a heavenly life to those who have been ministered unto thus far by earthly influences. We pray that there may be many that shall heartily renounce their sins and overcome them. And may many break forth into songs. And may their voices be as the voice of spring. May we hear the sound of birds that sing once more, saying, Spring hath come again. May we hear vocal joy on every hand. May we hear from those who pray in silence and in secret. May we hear from those who pray in their households. May we hear from those who gather together, two or three in thy name. May they have thee in their midst. May we hear from those who go forth to teach the poor, and to relieve the suffering, and to minister to the sick and to the dying. Grant, O Lord our God! that they may be filled with the Holy Ghost. May they bear the very spirit of their Master with them. May they go forth even with tears, sowing seed in strange places; and may they come continually with joy, having their bosom filled with sheaves! May all this Church be a Church of ministering spirits. May it have in each one a servant faithful in his sphere. May we be up and doing the things which our hands find to do, watching and waiting for the coming of Christ. We know not when he will come—whether at morning, at noon, at night, or at midnight. Therefore may we always be ready, having our harness on. May we be found working whenever the Master shall come. We pray that thou wilt bless the poor, and comfort them in their straightened circumstances. Open the hearts of those around about them, to give them sympathy and succor. And we pray for all that are rich, that they may not put their heart in their riches, nor grow vain nor proud, nor avaricious. May they be rich in good works.

We pray for all those that are in the perplexities and trials of business. Give them a happy issue from their trouble, and overrule all things in thy providence for their spiritual as well as their temporal good.

Bless the young. May they make for themselves the highest conception of manhood; and may they seek, with noble ardor, to be better, more strong, and more fruitful in good than those who have gone before them.

And we pray for the old. As their feet are beginning to tread less and less strongly, and as they are coming near to the borders of this land, may they find that they are drawing near to the borders of the other land of hope and truth and immortality.

We pray, O God! that thou wilt bless the sick, and be with them this day, in their chambers. Bear to them the music and the prayer and all the service of devotion in the sanctuary, by thy Spirit. May they sing in heart; and may they find their way toward God. Prepare those who are appointed unto death for a sweet deliverance from care and trouble, and for a joyful entrance into thy heavenly kingdom.

And we pray for all this land. We pray that thou wilt grant that education may go forth everywhere, preparing the way for the Gospel. And everywhere may the Gospel raise men in intelligence, and in true knowledge, and in virtue, and in piety.

Bless the nations of the earth; and grant, we pray thee, that speedily they may be lifted up so high that men shall not be able any longer to oppress men. And grant that truth, knowledge and manhood may become so strong that the nations shall secure peace in the fear of God. And we pray that wars and famine and pestilence may be things of the past. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Hast thou not promised? Wilt thou not perform? Thou that hast administered from age to age as if the life of man were a very little thing with thee, oh! delay not too long, hide not the counsels of thy mercies too long, lest the hearts of men grow weary with waiting. Come, O, thou Prince of peace! O, thou that bringest joyful tidings!—come, and command the nations that they rest, and give occasion to none to say to his neighbor, Know ye the Lord? May all know thee from the greatest unto the least. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

LABOR AND HARVEST.

I propose, this morning, to follow the tenor of the Scripture which I read in your hearing as a part of the opening service. It is remarkable in one respect, as being more nearly a connected view of a day in Christ's life than we are accustomed to find in the Gospel narratives. For we are to remember that those literary devices which have become so familiar that a child understands them in our day, were quite unknown to the simple and humble recorders of the life of Christ. No one would think, now, of writing a person's life without having regard to the element of time—without recording events in the order in which they occurred, and in their probable relation or juxtaposition to each other. But while there is a sort of regard in the narratives of the evangelists to chronology, there cannot be a doubt that events are frequently grouped in such a way that all thought of time is lost, so that we cannot tell whether a given parable was spoken early or late, or where five or six parables are recorded in one chapter, whether all of them were spoken at one time, or whether they were picked up like pearls and strung together.

Now and then we have what we may call an *interior*. A sort of window or door opens, through which we may look in; and we see a scene in its inception, in its development, and in its termination. It is organized, as it were, in itself, so that we see it perfectly, just as if we were on the spot at the time of its occurrence. And such I think is the scene, a description of which I have read in your hearing.

It took place in the early part of the last year of the Saviour's ministry—the main, the harvest year. He was in Galilee. He had been working many miracles; he had been delivering many discourses; he had made one or two circuits throughout Galilee, preaching in the cities and villages. All the great cities around the edge of the Lake of Galilee had witnessed his power. Capernaum, which had become his home after he was rejected from Nazareth, his childhood home, became his headquarters during all the rest of his ministry. He had just delivered the Sermon on the Mount. The next event recorded in his history was the working of a miracle—the raising to life of the widow's son at Nain. That,

SUNDAY MORNING, Feb. 26, 1871. LESSON: LUKE VII., 11–35. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 269, 717, 755.

joined to all the other things which he did, had given a new impulse to his fame The common people were enthusiastic over him. There was no drawback in their case. And although the Pharisees had begun to find occasion for bitter dislike, they had not yet thought it meet to break with him openly. There were some secret councils against him, but they had not assumed much importance outwardly; and so, it may be said that he stood at the height of his popularity at that time. And he was followed and believed in by the great mass of the common people. They believed in *him*, even if they did not believe in his doctrine. And he was not yet openly opposed by the ruling forces of society.

It was at this time that John, the old lion-heart, was cooped up in a prison—in the castle of Machærus, on the east side of the Dead Sea—one of those old castles made in times of war, perched high up on a cliff, and looking into a deep and dark gorge through which a stream ran from the eastern mountains into the Dead Sea. Afar off, he heard of the fame of this preacher. He had himself been shut up. His work seemed to have come to an end. We have not a single syllable as to the man's history; but he lay in that dark prison. We know the history of the termination of his witness and life; but of what he thought and how he felt there is no record, except this little gleam. As it were, against the walls of this great castle there came echoes of the miracles and wonders of Christ, and of the enthusiasm of the people which he was exciting in Galilee. These echoes had stirred John up to know whether the man who was doing these things was that man of whom he had been taught that he was the forerunner. And so he sent forth some of his disciples—who, it seems, were allowed access to him. They came to Christ in Galilee, and said,

"John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come [art thou the prophet that was expected]? or look we [waiting and watching] for another?"

Now, it would seem to us as though the Saviour might have said, at once, "I am he," but it is a remarkable fact that, up to this time, our Saviour had not declared himself to be the Messiah. If he had done it to his disciples, it was privately. In public he had not even taken upon himself the name of *the Son of God*. He called himself *the Son of Man*. He appeared to the people, and, for aught that he had said or done, they had a right to suppose that he was simply a Jewish prophet; and that was the testimony which went out in respect to him. That was what the common people said of him.

"And there came a fear on all; and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people."

When John sent his disciples, therefore, to ask whether Christ was the Messiah (for that is the purport of the question), we should suppose that he would have replied, at least confidentially, to his faithful forerunner, John, saying, "Yes, I *am* he;" but instead of that, he said,

"Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen."

What things had they seen? It seems to have been one of those fruitful hours in the Saviour's history. Christ was not fruitful at all times, either in his discourses or in his marvelous works; but he had periods of fruitfulness; and he seems then to have stood on the edge of one of them. It is recorded:

"In that same hour he cured many of their infirmities, and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight."

Instead of answering categorically the question put to him, he said,

"Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached."

That last was the most wonderful stroke of the whole of it. In that corrupt and oppressive age, in that unfeeling, avaricious, grinding country, under that despotic government, humanity, taking care of the poor, was the most astonishing of all. Not the raising of the dead, not the restoring of hearing nor sight, was so wonderful as that there should be a heart that really occupied itself with thinking of the poor.

"To the poor the Gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

With that answer the messengers retired.

This interview seems to have given to Christ a text; for he took his texts not out of the Old Testament—except those for synagogical days. Those he did. But the discourses which he delivered through the week were discourses that sprang from some incident or some history. And this event seems to have given him a text. He began to question the multitude as to why it was that they were interested in John—knowing that they were. Looking around upon them, he said,

"What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?"

In other words, "Did you think that there was some necromancer, some mountebank, some deft, dextrous man, that, as it were, dazzled your eye, as it is dazzled by the shaking of a reed that stands weak and helpless in the wind? Did you go out to see a man that would shake before you with some spectacular effect that had no validity?" There were some that went on that account, undoubtedly.

"What went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold they which are gorgeously appareled, and live delicately, are in Kings' courts."

It was as if he had said, "If you went out to see one that came in all the circumstance of your land, as a prince, gorgeously appareled, and with all the insignia of wealth and power upon him, you should not have gone down to the wilderness of the Jordan. That is not the place in which such men would appear. You should have gone to cities.

"But what went ye out for to see? A prophet?"

There was no bait that took so universally as a prophet, with the people of Palestine. They would run for that when they would not run for anything else. They were always hoping for a prophet. They were a people peculiarly addicted to prophets. Prophets were a wonder. They were regarded as more than ordinary men. There was nothing that whetted curiosity more. There was nothing that the people more desired to have among them. And the very imposters assumed to be prophets' sons, and availed themselves of the national pride and faith and credulity.

"Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet."

And now he enlarges upon John's character. He eulogizes him. He also measures and ranks him. I do not think that we can follow and sympathize here. We are obliged to take the declaration at what it is worth. There are no indications by which we can set a judgment upon the life and deeds of John. This is the eulogy:

"I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist."

When you recall such men as Samuel, as Elijah, as Elisha, as Jeremiah, as Isaiah, as Ezekiel, and as the constellation of minor prophets, and when you recollect what deeds they performed, it seems very strange that this lone preacher in the wilderness of the Jordan should have been ranked with them, and preferred before them. Certainly, he never was occupied with any such events of history as the prophet of Ahab's day was. Certainly, he was not concerned much with scenes of weird and dramatic effect as the old prophets were. Clothed in skins, as often they were (I suppose that if we had seen Elijah we would have believed him to be a Bedouin, and a wild Bedouin at that—an Arab); attired in the costume that they used to wear; bold as they were in their manners; coming and going at seasons unexpected; appearing and disappearing in the same hour; running on foot, and outrunning chariots and horsemen; having that peculiarly wild and dramatic character which belonged to the Oriental; flashing denunciations before the people; shaking kings upon their thrones;—certainly, when you think of these prophets, there seems to

be nothing to justify the declaration respecting John that no man born of woman was equal to him. And I suppose it must have referred to a certain grandeur of nature that was in him. I suppose there must have been in him a certain largeness of spirit, a certain sincerity of disposition, a certain breadth of moral constitution and inner life, to which reference was made. I suppose he must have been so organized that those who approached him felt that he was an august man, made upon a larger pattern than ordinary men. Although he did not perform as many functions, or have as many social relations, as persons that went before him, he undoubtedly was the mightiest of them, and went down deeper, and stretched out wider, and lifted himself up higher. But as we did not see him, and as these other prophets are more prominently set forth in the records of history, it always seems to us as though this eulogy was somewhat extravagant. Christ, however, measures John, and ranks him, saying,

"There is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but [mark this] he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

That is, "In that new kingdom which I am bringing in; in that new kingdom in which the sweet moral nature of man shall predominate over the harsh and acerb passions and appetites; in that new kingdom in which the supersensuous faculties shall be enthroned, and the gross and basilar instincts shall be servitors—in that new kingdom, John himself shall seem coarse." He was a stern man, built according to the pattern, and the best pattern, of the Old Testament, speaking to the conscience and to the fear of men, and vindicating the visible law and the institutions of his country, and bringing home to men the consciousness of their weakness and wickedness. He was an honored and stalwart and stanch man. But he had not the blossoming elements of grace and sweetness, he had not the heavenly mindedness, which belonged to the new empire of faith and love. And the least in the new kingdom would be greater than he.

This leads Jesus to consider, next, his own success, as contrasted with John's. You perceive how wonderfully events fall out in sequence, in chronological order, here. He evidently was thinking of the interviews which had taken place between him and the people, and of John's ministrations among them; and he said,

"Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?"

And then a figure rose up in his mind. For Jesus was one who did not ask dignified things to bear out feeble thoughts. He had such power in his thought that he could take insignificant things and make them dignified.

You shall see in every house, children playing at various games. You shall see in the corner of the nursery two or three little girls gathered together, and with their tiny dishes, playing "have company." Or they go through a mimic representation of some other phase of life. Now a doll is sick, and the doctor is called, and the doll must take some medicine. And all the expostulations are employed which have been addressed to the little lady herself at different times when she has been sick. She insists that the dose is not bitter but sweet, and resorts to all manner of gentle little falsehoods which it seems have been practiced upon her. And so in a variety of ways the children imitate life. On another occasion you will see gone through with all the circumstance of the reception of company. At one time or another you will see enacted in children's plays pretty much all that they have seen in life.

So in the olden times human nature was true to itself. Children used to gather in the open squares, in the market places, and play their games. And sometimes they would say, "Let us play wedding;" and they would pipe and make music, as if the company were going out to arrange themselves; and there would be the litttle mimic procession. At other times they would say, "No, let us play funeral." And then they would put on lugubrious looks, and dishevel as much as possible their hair, and make believe sorrow. Some would cry a little, and the rest would groan, and hone, and "take on," as the saying is. And so they would mimic a funeral scene.

And you have seen children that would get "mad" and would not play. It seems that it was just so at that time, and there. And that is just the thing that struck Christ's mind. The scene came up in his imagination of children in the market-place, where one says to another, "We piped unto you, and you would not dance. And then, seeing that you did not want that, we tried the other thing, and mourned to you; and then you would not play. You would not play either wedding or funeral. You would not play at all." It was that distinctive scene from childhood that our Saviour seized. And he said:

"Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? They are like unto children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept."

Then he made just that application. "This generation," he said, "have been tried both by things touching fear and sorrow, and by things touching joy and pleasure and hope. John came neither eating nor drinking. He was an ascetic. He was bred in the wilderness. He was clothed in skins. He fed upon locusts and wild honey—the coars-

est and meanest of cheap food. He came as a stern man, and laid down the law to men. And what did they do? Well, some followed him; but the great mass of the people said, 'Why, he hath a devil.'" That is, they called him crazy. They used to think that demoniac possessions were the origin of insanity. And they said of John, "He is a fantastic, insane man, and he lives in the wilderness, and teaches and preaches these things because his brain is out of order." That was the fate which befel a man who was endeavoring to impress upon men pure morality, and all the requirements of the eternal government of God. Such was the effect which he produced, that they turned away from his message, and said, "He is crazy." Then the Son of Man came eating and drinking. He left the wilderness. He came back into civilized life. He dwelt in villages and towns according to the manners and customs of the people. He went forth preaching of familiar things. And his preaching was lighted up by much that was attractive and congenial. By ten thousand sympathies he made himself dear to the people. And what is said about him? 'Behold a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.'

We are not to suppose that this was the testimony of all the people. We are not to suppose, as some have rashly taught, that Christ lived so convivially that it was the impression throughout the community that he was a *bon vivant*. This is the voice of that part of the community that desired to find something against him. Among the common people there was no such thing said. He did eat and drink with men; and he ate and drank as they ate and drank. When he was in the houses of the poor, he ate their plain fare; and when he was in the houses of the rich, he ate the dishes which burdened their tables. They made feasts for him; and when they poured the wine of the country, he drank the wine of the country. When they set before him the luxuries of the country, he partook of the luxuries of the country. He made himself a man among men. He fell in with the customs of the people among whom he sojourned. Nothing is more striking than how perfect a Jew he was, than how rigorous he was in his conformity to the modes of life in accordance with which he was brought up. So much of a Jew was he, that he did not abandon the synagogue. Every Sabbath found him in his place worshiping with the people, as was the custom of his country. And when he preached the Sermon on the Mount, lest the people should suppose that he was seeking to bring in a new custom, he said,

"Think not I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For I verily say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

He did not wish them to think that he desired to overthrow their old system. On the contrary, he asserted his Hebraism; he declared his faith in the old Mosaic institutions; and he did it all his life, through his whole career, and to the very last of it. A stranger, knowing nothing of his history, would scarcely have discriminated him in any respect from a model Jew, so perfectly had he adapted himself to the ways of the people. He was, therefore, a man among men. And his enemies said, "He is a glutton," because he sat at meat with rich men; and "He is a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners," because he went down from the high places where he consorted with the rich, to the poorest and lowest and most despised, and consorted with them.

Here, then, had come the ascetic John and the social Christ; here had come the ministration of terror on the conscience, and here had come the ministration of hope on the heart; here had come the rude man of the wilderness that thundered repentance in the ears of the terrified crowd, and here had come the man that dropped tears with the weepers, that stopped the bier and called the dead to life again, and gave back to the stricken mother her only son; here came the man that little children ran to, and clasped, and climbed up upon; here came the man that was everywhere sought by the high and by the low, by the gentle and the humble—and what was the result? It was said to them, "Let us play funeral" (going back to the image of the children), and they would not; and then it was said to them, "Let us play wedding," and they would not. They would not take the truth that they needed to make them better men, either from John or from Christ. They would not take it from one that represented intellect and conscience, nor would they take it from one that represented heart and faith.

"But wisdom is justified of all her children."

That is the end of this discourse. And with this narrative, thus drawn out; with this picture of the method of Christ's teaching, of the way in which he found his subjects, and of the kind of incidents which he brought in for illustration to make the truth, not abstract and remote and systematic, but homely and most familiar; with this interior view, as it were, of a portion of a day's labor, we shall leave the historic and descriptive part, and proceed to a few points of practical application.

1. The faults which men are accustomed to find with religion and with its ministrations, are symptoms, not so much of the imperfection of external things, as of the condition of their own hearts. It is true that religious institutions are very imperfect. None feel this more than those who administer them, or are responsible for them. It

is true that they who preach the truth are very weak men, and preach with many errors and much imperfection. None know this so well as those who preach the most. And there are many in the community who stand quite disconnected from any true religious work, or any useful occupation of beneficence or of mercy, and are perpetually finding fault with churches, and with ministers, and with all the varied institutions which have sprung up under the Gospel of Christ. And they would fain make us believe that the reason why they are not better, is that these things are so poor. But, after all, the reason why men are not truly spiritual and Christian, is not the incompetence of external institutions; it is not the poorness of preaching; it is not the imperfections of the church; it is not that there are so many unadaptations in the external institutions of the religious world. It is that men have at heart an indisposition to conform to that by which they might go out of the animal and lower life, into the spiritual life. The trouble is in the men themselves, and not in the institutions that surround them. They are like sick children. Whatever the nurse may bring, whether it be of food, or of drink, or of some object of amusement, the child pushes it pettishly away. Nothing suits the child. It is not because the picture is not beautiful; it is not because the drink is not cooling and palatable; it is not because the food is not good: it is because the irritable nerve is such that nothing seems good, no matter how good it may be, and nothing seems desirable, no matter how attractive it may be. And there are hundreds of men in every community who refuse to bow down the pride of their nature, and who refuse to accept the service of our Lord Jesus Christ, because of the heart that they carry in them, although the reasons which they allege are reasons of exterior religion.

2. When men are under the full dominion of worldly passions, you cannot change them by any modifications of manner. I do not mean by that, that there is no skill to be used; I do not mean that there is not a difference between power and weakness in preaching; I do not mean that clear thinking is not better than feeble thinking, or none at all; I do not mean that there is not an art, and a sublime art, in winning men, so that they shall be tempted or persuaded to leave their evil ways. But this I say: There is no thinking, and no combination of arguments, and no skill, that can reach to overthrow men's pride, and men's avarice, and men's selfishness and sordidness. There is no power short of the Spirit of God that can do it. When the heart of man is fortified in his weakness; when it is desperately set in him to do evil, all that men can do is to break upon them as the sea breaks on the rocky shore. It is the sea that is sent back, and the rock that stands firm. There are scores of men

who live for the flesh; who live under the dominion of the senses; and who yet live in the full light of truth. None know it better than they. There are men that have read every word of Scripture; there are men that are familiar with every argument and statement in theology; there are men that have known and seen much of the power of God in revivals; but there is within them that fixed, rooted, toughened life of sin that refuses to yield itself to any power which can be wielded merely by the hands of men.

3. And that which is true of individuals, is true also of communities. There are many men who find fault with reformations in communities, complaining that they were not wisely begun; that they were not carried forward skillfully; that they were instituted by rough men; that harsh measures were employed; that therefore prejudices were engendered, that men were exasperated, their lower nature being excited,—all of which is true. It is memorably true of the struggle that we waged for human liberty. It is true that if we were to go back and examine the pioneers in that struggle, and measure their career, we would have no right to believe that they could have succeeded. Nor do I believe that they, as instruments, did succeed. There was a Providence of which they were pioneers, which they did not understand, and which we do not understand. There was a purpose of God; and they, as it were, were flung out as *avant couriers*, not knowing themselves the message which they were carrying. But if you measure them by any approved standard of skill, or any history of success, they were unskilled in their mode of approaching the community. And yet, if they had been wise as serpents and harmless as doves, it would have made no difference. It was one of those cases in which the hearts of men were fully set in them to do evil, and in which lust, laziness, and lucre—the three prime demons of slavery—held the hearts and purposes of men. No wisdom, and no moral power, could ever have tempted them to relax their hold upon their ill-gotten gains, or to remit their captives to liberty again. When, therefore, men said, "Abolition might have come long ago; and yet the evils of slavery were augmented," it was finding fault, first, on the one side, with John, and then, on the other side, with Jesus. At one time they were appealed to by that which was gentle, and inviting, and winning, and at another time by that which was threatening; but neither the one nor the other would meet them. They did not want to be met. John came neither eating nor drinking, and they said that he had a devil; and then Christ came eating and drinking, and they said that he was a glutton. The Quakers came with peace, and they received no better fare than Garrison, who came with war. It might have been better or worse.

according to circumstances; but the trouble was that the hearts of men did not mean to give up. The kingdom of Satan was within; the armed man did not mean to be dispossessed; and nothing but the terrific revolutions that shook down the nation were competent to remedy the evil that was eating out the life of the people.

4. It will encourage and comfort all those who are laboring without immediate results, whether it be for themselves, for their households, for the communities in which they dwell, or for any great reformatory objects which are the outspringings of the Gospel of Christ, to know that the two greatest preachers—John and Christ, respectively—looked over the field where they had spent their lives, laboring about equal periods (probably about two years each), and saw little fruit as the result of their labors. Christ went through his whole life conscious that he was doing immediately but little. He gathered no church. He laid the foundation of no church that was to be gathered. He set aside nothing of the ancient system. He left that to be corrected, so far as it was erroneous, by the advancing force of the new principle. The disciples themselves did not believe that they were sent to found a church. Men tell us that the apostles did. How, then, shall we account for the fact that twenty years after Paul's conversion and Christ's ascension, Paul was in Jerusalem, and the apostles came to him and said, "It is charged that you do not believe in Moses, and in his institutes. Now there are two men under vows, and going up to cleanse themselves: do you go with them into the temple and pay their charges, that it may be a testimony that you do believe in Moses, and in the temple, and in the institutes of the old economy"; and that for that very sake, Paul did go up into the temple and pay those men's charges, calling the priests to witness, that it might be reported of him, and that it might everywhere be known, that he was not attempting to do away with Mosaism. And is it to be supposed, when for twenty years the Christians all met in the temple, and the synagogue was the place where they worshiped, and there was not a Christian church separate from and independent of Judaism—is it to be supposed, when this was the case, that Christ had filled the minds of the apostles with the idea of an absolutely new church, and an entirely new economy, as we are taught that he had? No, there was nothing of this kind. Christ did not break away from the church of his fathers. He left that to be dealt with by the process of growth. He simply said this: "No outward form of church whatever, no externality, shall influence men." None was conditioned or transmitted. Nor did his private discourses with his disciples lay the foundation for any. As a matter of history, all

modern churches have been the outgrowth of the old synagogue, little by little. It was a hundred years after Christ was on earth before there were any churches like our Christian churches. The whole thought that the Christianity of modern times was laid out in perspective by Christ, as an architect's plans are laid out, and that the apostles and disciples were told just how to organize the church, and just what to do in carrying it on, is fabulous. There is not a historical basis for a single part of it. Christ, as a Jew, and as a preacher of spirituality, declared that Moses and the prophets rightly interpreted to themselves the higher spiritual life. And the whole tenor of his ministry was to develop the spiritual side of man, and then let it, by the process of development, provide its own institutions, and come down, as it has, through long periods of time, and thus reach its final issue, as everything else does in the great scheme of progressive development.

And so, when Christ looked over his own ministry and life, though he came to give himself a ransom for many; though he knew that in himself, and in the truths which he made known to men, lay the seed of future history; although he felt that he brought into the world the new kingdom, and the higher life; it seemed to him that he was, comparatively speaking, a cipher. He gathered no great bands. Multitudes came after him, and then divided and went home. There was no fixed church in any such sense as we now understand the term *church*. There was no sect, there was no school, there were no great denominational influences, around about him. When he died, how was it? There were about five or six hundred men who retained an affectionate remembrance of him. They were scattered up and down throughout the land. That was all! Look! See the women going apart to mourn and grieve in a chamber. Here and there scattered throughout Jerusalem were those who had been most intimate with him. Look at them walking along the dusty way, climbing the hill westward to Emmaus, giving expression to their disappointment at his defeat, and saying, "We trusted that it had been he which would have redeemed Israel." See how, when, at last, he went out to Bethany and was taken from their sight, there were not more than could go back to Jerusalem and assemble in a single upper room. They were all that were left. And this was everything that was apparent of the work of God manifest in the flesh. This was the ministration of Christ in its immediate results. And yet, although there was so little for the sight, all the indications of modern history go to show that there was a leaven of Christ which has been silently working, and which will work till the whole is leavened.

Are you working in a like spirit, parents? In your children, fractious, and not rightly organized, it may be, are natures that must be waited for until some years further down, when they shall get the help of their now undeveloped faculties; and are you counseling and restraining them, and praying with them? Are you discouraged because your labors seem so great, and the fruits seem so little? Remember the labors of the apostles and prophets; and remember the labors of the Shepherd, Jesus himself. Remember how he gave his whole life, and reaped almost nothing in his own time. He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied; but only far down in the future. And shall the disciple be more than the Master? Shall the servant be greater than his Lord? Shall we be discouraged and not have heart to work on and on, because we do not immediately see the fruit of our labor?

Of those that labor out of the family, and in the church, how many there are that see the church itself feeble, its communicants few, and its influence in the community small! How many there are who have spent ten years, fifteen years, a score of years, in one place, bearing witness and preaching as their Master before them did, and yet who have but very little that cheers and comforts them! If they have been indolent, that is one reason for it; but in many such cases they have been faithful, conscientious, godly men. And why should they complain. If the Master spent his life freely, why should not they, his disciples, if it please God, be willing to stand in the field of duty, and pour out their lives?

There is something higher in an unsuccessful ministry carried out faithfully to the end, than there is in a very brilliant and successful ministry. Any man can work when every stroke of his hand brings down the fruit rattling from the tree to the ground; but to labor in season and out of season, under every discouragement, by the power of faith, through years and years and years, and to die, as Moses did, without the sight of the promised land—that requires a heroism which is transcendent. It may not shine nor illustrate itself on earth; but it will be seen in heaven. For there be those that are first here who shall be last in the other world, and those that are last here, who shall be first there. Many a humble man, who has had no success in this world, many a pastor in some outlying church who has labored long and faithfully without any visible results, many a poor missionary who has spent his whole life in unrequited service, shall himself be amazed, amidst the amazement of all that behold, to find how high he rises and stands in the last great day. He goes up as one that has nothing to carry him; and behold, "he shines as the stars that shone over him in the firmament."

And that which is true of pastoral labor, is just as true of lay labor in churches, or of labor in reformatory enterprises which are carried on outside of the churches. Those that labor in the cause of temperance, and those that labor for the rectification of morals—how often they are discouraged! It is comparatively an easy thing to put a broken bone in its place again, and reset the joint in its socket; but it is not an easy thing to control, and rightly develop, the enormous resources of pride. It is not an easy thing to suppress the jealousies and hatreds and rancors of the human heart. The man that undertakes to rectify the times in which he lives, undertakes to do, not only a gigantic work of faith and patience, but one that he must make up his mind to pursue, not according to sight, but according to faith. And no man, I think, ever puts the plow into the furrow and does not look back, and sows good seed therein, that a harvest does not follow. If he does not reap the fruit of his sowing, other men will. If you are laying right foundations, though you may not build on them, other men shall, and the topstones shall yet go up with shoutings of, "Grace, grace unto it."

Let us, then, take comfort from this scene in the life of our Saviour. If we suffer obloquy, if we are rejected of men, and if we reap but little fruit from much labor, let us remember that we are in the school of Him who came to give his life for the age in which he lived, but reaped almost nothing in that age. He died for the world; but he had to re-ascend to his Father's throne and sit patiently waiting through the centuries, before he could see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee our heavenly Father, with the memory of thy goodness upon us. Ever since we were born, thou hast commanded all things to serve us. The heaven above; the earth beneath; all the courses of thy providence, and the life thereof, which is of thy grace—these things have worked together to bring us up out of nature, and its grossness, and ignorance, and darkness, and selfishness, into the life of Christ, where is peace, and purity, and joy, and hope, and all gentleness and goodness. We thank thee for all the ministration of the past; for the knowledge which has been vouchsafed to us; for the influences which have been provided, and registered, and brought continually to bear upon us; for all restraint; for all incitement. We thank thee for our homes, and for all that there is in them that we yet delight to honor with affectionate and reverential memory; for their example and faith that have gone before. We thank thee for all the influences which early came from thee, from thy church, from thy word, from faithful witnesses. We thank thee for all that fellowship and sweet society in which we have been brought up.

And now, O Lord! we thank thee that thou hast continued thy mercies to

us even unto this day. The lines have fallen to us in pleasant places. We have a goodly heritage. How much thou hast vouchsafed to us in the life that we have led in this house! How many have been the days (as we look back upon them, they are innumerable) of rich experience! What heights have we ascended! What visions have we beheld! What joys have been distilled upon us from above! What weariness has been rested! What doubts have been dispelled! What hopes have been kindled! What aspirations have been excited! How near hast thou brought to us things which before were invisible! How easily have we been able to reach forth and pluck from the tree of life the leaves that were for the healing of the nations. We rejoice in all the past, and take courage, and look forward into the future, believing that the same God that hath guided us thus far will guide us unto the end. And as unto a faithful friend we commit the keeping of our souls to thee, O, Father! to thee, O Redeemer and Saviour! to thee, O, sanctifying Spirit! And we beseech of thee that the life which we live may be a life, not in the flesh, but in the spirit. And in the time to come may we not fall behind the privilege of the times gone by. May we gather new strength. May we propose to ourselves nobler enterprises. May we desire to see every thought and every feeling brought into subjection to Christ Jesus. May all things shine in the presence of thy Spirit. Dwell in us, thou Source of light and of power—dwell in us, that our feebleness may be intoned, and that all things which are dark and doubtful may be purged by the bright shining light of thy countenance.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all that are in thy presence—upon each severally, as thou seest that he needs. Wilt thou grant an answer to the prayers of those who in burden of spirit have come up to thy sanctuary to-day, to present their wants to thee. How easy is it, when it is best, for thee to grant to thy children answers of mercy! And to those who seek relief at thy hands, either say that the troubles shall go, or say, My grace shall be sufficient for thee.

And we pray that thou wilt uphold all those who are tempted and tried; all those who walk in darkness; and all those who seem to themselves entangled and lost. Wilt thou succor them? And grant, if there be such present this morning, asking thy divine help, that they may have the intimation of thy presence, and the joy of thy salvation.

If there be those here this morning who are bereaved, and who look back upon many dark ways of trouble which have fallen upon them continuously, like drops of rain, we pray that thou wilt set thy bow in the heavens, that they may know that with every storm there is also the promise. May they, in the midst of their sorrows and bereavements, remember the Sufferer who, for their sake, was bowed down; who carried their griefs and their sorrows. And may they find present help in their time of need.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt be with all those who are separated from us to-day, who are afar off, or detained at home. Be with each heart. Renew to each one thy covenant promises. Grant unto every one a portion of the Word of God. As we are here sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so may there be borne to them the air and the substance which exists in fuller measure in heaven.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that all in our midst who are perplexed, and heavy-laden with worldly things, and who are led only by earthly wisdom, may discern the things that are right, and seek to carry out right things.

Grant, we pray thee, that thy kingdom may come in every heart. Are there not those who have long since fallen away from their former belief? And is it not, at least, the time of their deliverance? Bring forth Spring out

the Winter of many a barren heart. O thou that hast power on high, we beseech of thee that thou wilt look upon those who are far from the truth and the faith of their childhood; who have been ensnared and carried into evil ways; and who have broken loose from the instruction of former times. O thou that canst restore sight to the blind, and give life to the dead, canst thou not bring back again to sight and life those who long ago lost sight of God and holy things? We pray that they may see the error of their ways: that they may be softened in heart; that they may be strengthened in purpose; that they may escape from the snares which are set for their destruction; that they may be brought back to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.

We pray for all that are teaching in Sabbath-schools and Bible-classes; for all that go forth teaching thy word; visiting those that are poor and needy, those that are sick, and those that are in prison, Will the Lord have them in his holy keeping, and grant unto them grace, mercy and peace. And may they, in their smaller circle, see of the travail of their souls; and may they be satisfied of the work that is prospered in their hands.

We pray that thou wilt bless all Churches of every name. We thank thee that there is more kindliness one toward another. Draw yet closer together the bonds that unite thy servants, and show them the way of concord and of peace. And we pray that the Gospel may be spread throughout all the world. And in our own land may we see temperance prevail, and the Sabbath revered, and laws wisely and purely created and administered.

We beseech of thee that schools and colleges may come up into remembrance before thee, to-day: and that all the Churches on our far frontier, and throughout the scattered regions that are in weakness, may be blest of thee. And wherever thy servants are, there, to-day, may the blessing of God and the strength of the Lord abide with them.

We thank thee that the prospect of peace is coming again upon the torn and distracted nations of the earth. Make haste and grant that the day may come; O, thou righteous God! when it shall not be needful for thee to stretch out the rod and to dash nations to pieces as a potter's vessel. May the better day come when nations shall have learned of thee, when there shall be given to all mankind the knowledge of God, when peace and temperance and self-government shall prevail, and when cruelty and superstition and oppression shall have passed away, and shall be as the dreams of the dreary night.

Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be the praise forevermore. *Amen.*

MEN'S IGNORANCE

AND

HELPLESSNESS IN PRAYER.

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us [or within us] with groanings which cannot be uttered."—Rom. viii., 26.

There are two ideas of life. One of them may be called the *secular idea.* It respects man as a creature subject to material law —as a creature subject to all the organizations and laws of human society.

Prayer, regarded in the light of this view, is simply supplication for the *things* that men need. Of that kind of prayer it is said that *our Father in heaven knoweth what we have need of, before we ask him.* Still, it is proper to ask. We pray, therefore, for money, and for health, and for strength, and for food, and for raiment, and for success in our enterprises, and for defense against dangers, and for a thousand things that have relation to our earthly life, and to the conditions of prosperity, and all the affairs that are involved in it.

This is the sphere in which most men think of prayer. Most men pray only in the spirit of their lower wants, and of their secular temper.

There is a deeper view, however, in human life. This world is, as it were, a world out of which we are to be born—a womb of time from which is to come forth a new manhood. And in regard to that it is that our text speaks. We do not know what to pray for as we ought where not bodily want, but soul want, or the want of a deeper, nobler manhood, is concerned. There is where prayer is most important, and least breathed, and where less than anywhere else we understand how to pray.

Some examination of man's position in this life will enable you to appreciate how deep this declaration of the apostle draws. And all those persons who think that preaching ought to be a string

Sunday Morning, Mar. 5, 1871. Lesson: Rom VIII., 28-39. Hymns (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 15, 531, 725.

of truisms, or superficial moralities, or *common sense views*, as they are called, I take it for granted have never read the book of Romans; or if they have, that they never touched bottom. It is the profoundest book, I think, of the Bible, and involves more philosophy in the same space than any other. And it is not the less philosophy because it is the philosophy of experience. There are deeper insights in the seventh and eighth of Romans into the condition of man in this life, and into the future state into which he is going, than anywhere else that I know of in an equal compass—I will not say in literature; for there are but few such insights there which have not been derived from the Bible; but inspiration itself, it seems to me, is stronger, and deeper, and clearer, in those chapters of Romans, than anywhere else in the preaching of Paul. And I think it is strictly scientific, and that it will bear the test of the very latest theories and philosophies.

Man is born into this life a double creature. He is an animal complete. There are no animals that roam the woods, or browse through the fields, or fly in the air, there are none of the higher animals, that excel man in the perfect equipment of animalhood. Force, sagacity, cunning, grasping, driving power, grinding power, consuming power—these man has. He has all that is necessary for the maintenance of existence, for support, for defense, for accumulation. Man has a superior endowment of all those energies and passions and engineering forces which belong to the animal. And if he were only an animal, he would get along much better than he does now. Because, although he would get along on a much lower plane, there would not be in him that inconsistence and clashing which now overthrow his plans, vex his life, and destroy his peace, and oftentimes defeat the very end of his existence.

But men, however, are not born into life simply animals: they are born into life with the elements of spiritual manhood as well as the elements of animalhood. Superimposed upon this lower or fleshly nature, as the apostle calls it, is a department of faculties which work directly away from the flesh and from the senses, toward things that are impalpable, invisible, and that can be recognized only by intuition. And it is in this direction that a man is essentially distinguished from the animals that are below him. That which discriminates him from all that is beneath him, is the supersensuous—using the term *sense* according to the scientific, material view.

Here, then, is the animal life in the conditions of this globe; and astride of it sits manhood. As the man rides the horse, so in us there is the manhood that rides the animal, or the beast, or was

meant to. It is oftentimes the case with unlucky riders that the steed throws the rider, and tramps him on the ground; and so it is in this case.

This is the generic statement of the double nature in man. And the Apostle runs that thought through almost every variation of statement. The *flesh* represents, in his terminology, the whole brood of lower faculties, or that part of our nature which constitutes us animals; and the *spirit* represents manhood, or that whole class of faculties by which we are exalted into the higher sphere—by which we become sons of God. In a figurative way, he represents these two as in conflict.

It is as if there were two bands of soldiers quartered in one tenement, having an upper and a lower story. On the ground floor is a company of brawling, drunken, unruly, brutal, violent, cruel men; and in the second story, above them, is a company of soldiers that are gentlemanly, and courteous, and humane, and well-disciplined. And there are three states of affairs which may exist. The brawling soldiers below may govern the house; and then they will have hard times up stairs; for their supplies will be cut off, and they will starve. Or, a part of the time the gentlemen up stairs may govern the house, and part of the time the coarse, brutal fellows down stairs may govern it; and then there will be a terrible conflict. And between the attempts of those up stairs to maintain discipline, and the attempts of those below stairs to break down discipline, the place will be a perfect pandemonium. There will be no peace there. They will be quarreling perpetually.

And so the animal nature and the manhood, in man, quarrel. Sometimes it is the lower nature that is in the ascendancy; and then whatever things are above it—conscience, faith, hope, all spiritual tendencies, and all supernal tendencies—are at a discount. The upper part of the mind is starved out because of the absolute ascendency of the appetites and passions—of pride, and selfishness, and envy, and lusts, and all manner of evil feelings.

Then, by and by, there is the second state. The state of resistance and conflict. The spirit wars against the flesh, and refuses to be in subjection to it. And while this war continues, sometimes one predominates and sometimes the other. The men up stairs to-day have the best of it, and the men down stairs to-morrow have the best of it. Nothing is settled; nothing is continuous; all is subject to chance.

There is many a half-formed man who has no fixed habits of life, and in whom sometimes one part of his nature gets momemtum and comes into the ascendency, and sometimes the other part. Some-

times those faculties which are seeking to do good, govern, and sometimes those that are seeking to do evil, govern. And to a greater or less extent there is a state of conflict between the upper and the lower nature, between the manhood and the animal, in every one of us.

Then comes that state in which, by the power of God's spirit, and by the discipline of life, complete ascendency is gained by our supersensuous nature. And all the other parts of our being *are brought into obedience*, as it is said, *to the Lord Jesus Christ.* Or, if you choose to follow out the psychological figure, the superior faculties in our souls assume control. And then there is peace. Then there is rest.

This thought of two men, one of whom is striving to do the thing that is right, and the other of whom is endeavoring to prevent him from doing it, is, in the seventh of Romans, carried out with great ingenuity and particularity. If you undertake to give a literal interpretation to it, you will meet with the same difficulties which are encountered by the commentators; but if you give it a figurative and pictorial rendering, you will still be in the realm of common sense, and will gain some instruction. In the great strife of life it is the ascendency of the lower or animal part, or the ascendancy of the upper or spiritual part, that determines a man's place and character, and for the most part his experience in this life.

Now, since this is the structure of man, and since the aim of human life is the complete development of a new creature stronger than the old man, or the animal man, consider what is the way in which men come into this life, and what is the condition which they sustain to knowledge in this life. And that you may not lose the clue by which I am guiding this discourse, I want to show you how true it is that we know not what to pray for as we ought, and that we do need the spirit of God *to strive and pray within us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* I wish to show that while we do know somewhat what to pray for, so far as our lower needs, the needs of our animal-hood, are concerned, when we come to the higher life, to the superiority of the higher manhood, there it is that we are so ignorant that the Apostle's words have an affecting realization in truth.

Consider, then, since we are by nature without divine illumination and guidance, how ignorant we must be of both the commands, specially and personally, and of the relations of those commands to our education toward manhood.

In the first place, consider how men are born into this world, knowing literally nothing. Every child has to rise from nothing up

to something. There are none that are born with anything more than a great bundle of tendencies, the opening of which, the training of which, the development of which, into partnership and affiliation and habits, is to come afterwards. There is not a soul that, coming into this life, comes knowing anything. We are born as ignorant as are the mollusks, or as the worms that burrow under the turf. Whatever we may come to, it is very certain that we come from the very lowest conceivable point—from zero. Here, lying latent, dormant, are these mighty faculties, both of the lower nature and of the higher; and a man knows no more about them than the hollyhock knows about what is in it. As it lies a seed, a hollyhock could not say, "I shall come forth, and spear up, and have all along my sides these wreaths of beauty." The hollyhock seed does not know what it will be, any more than the morning-glory seed knows what it will be; and the morning-glory seed could not say, "I shall spring up, and creep, and climb, and be covered all over with bells celestial for beauty." The hollyhock seed does not know what is in it; and the morning-glory seed does not know what is in it; and yet they know as much as a child knows, that lies during his first month a palpitating mass of pulp on the mother's knee.

Oh! how beautiful is the child in the mother's eyes, though it is a mere nothing, in its first estate!

And yet, wrapped up in that child, though yet unfolded, are twenty or thirty strong, intense, immeasurable powers. And when the child, little by little, comes to itself, he is, as it were, a chest of tools. And what would you think of a child's being turned by his father, at five years old, into a shop where there was a chest of some forty tools, of which he knew nothing, and of his being told to use them all? He handles them just as it happens, and of course has to suffer for his ignorance. He snatches up one tool, and cuts himself, and throws it down again. He tries another with the same result. And he learns, by and by, not to take a chisel by the wrong end. And he soon finds out that the use of a gimlet is not to pierce his hand. And by his mistakes and mishaps and sufferings, and it may be by an occasional exhortation, he learns to use those tools as they were designed to be used.

Now, a man's head is a chest of tools; and he is born ignorant of them, of their uses, of their power, and of their treatment. Of the whole lore of life he is utterly ignorant, and must be from the nature of things. He is in the same condition, when he comes into life, that a child would be if turned, at five years old, into a mechanics' shop, ignorant of the tools that he found there, and of their uses. The knowledge is to come gradually. The only difference in

the two cases is this: that in tool-life there is no complication, whereas in human life there is added hereditary influences. No two men have exactly the same proportion and development of life. All have something of everything; but all do not have it in the same proportion. And yet, management, education, in every particular case, turns on the precise combination of the faculties with which men are endowed. Some men are strong in reason, and are comparatively limited in passion. Other men have an immense passional nature, and have comparatively little reason. Some men gush forth like a mountain full of springs. They are filled with feeling, which jets out at every rift. Some men are as dry as a last year's mullein-stalk. They are said to be *proper*, simply because they stand still, when the reason why they do it is that they do not know how to do anything else. They are never shaken by passions, because they have no passions to be shaken by. They are never overcome by temptation to sin, because there is nothing in them to be tempted. They are sucked dry, as it were, by life or birth.

I am not speaking of the general responsibility of men to law. I am simply speaking of each man's finding his way to his best manhood. Every man has the problem of life to solve; and spirituality in each man has to be evolved by his own expansion. Although that may be helped by many circumstances, although the experience may help much, the special necessity is not taken away of exploring the channels and coast-lines of each man's own conformations. By thought and work shall you come to this knowledge. No man can tell it to you. Neither can it be revealed to you by philosophy. Even experience can do no more than hint it to you. And there is no one that is able to look into you and see just how you are put together, and tell you.

If a man is an expert horologist, he can take a watch, and open it, and see every wheel, and understand what its office is, and how it works, and say, "This wheel has such an escapement," or, "That wheel is balanced in such a way." The variations are few and slight, and easy to be seen. But what teacher, what preacher, what mental philosopher, who on earth, can tell anything about men, but each man for himself? Who can say, "The father has just such a conformation, and the mother has just such a conformation, and the child must have such and such a conformation"? Who can set these things down just as you would set down the terms of a problem in mathematics, with a certainty as to the result, or as you would examine the wheels of a machine, without any doubt as to their relations and functions?

No man can tell this in regard to another. Where a man at-

tempts to explain it, his explanation is a matter of guess. If he has any knowledge in this direction, it is empirical, for the most part. It is a sphere in which philosophy has very little scope, and in which no man finds out anything accurately.

Further, men are born into the world, with the sky above their heads, with climatic influences at work on every side of them, with material laws, on which their life depends, in operation all about them, with the physical globe beneath their feet, on which they are to exercise their powers, which is the hone that sharpens each faculty, which is the source of their supply, which is the shop in which they are to be disciplined, which is the school in which they are to be taught; and yet, how much do they know of this world? They are in it one year, two years; and by that time they begin to find out the difference between fire and that which is not fire. They find out only a few things during the first few years of their life. Meanwhile, that great physical world is acting on them all the time, shaping them, developing them, leading them out and forth. And it is late in life, comparatively, before they have any considerable knowledge of the conditions of the material globe, which has all the time a superimposed power and influence upon them.

Still further, men come into a society which is already cut out and prepared before they enter it, and which most powerfully affects them, stimulating their passions and appetites, drawing out their affections, winning their confidence, bewitching their imagination, and touching their sentient, emotional being on every side. Men are born into a society which they did not form, which is not interpreted to them, and which most of them pass through life without materially understanding, except in a mechanical way. Men, endowed with so many faculties of the nature of which they are ignorant, and born into a material world of which they know nothing, and which is powerfully influencing them, are ushered into a society the ten thousand influences of which are warping them, biasing them, stimulating them, and drawing them hither and thither. And yet they are ignorant of that society, and of its social relations.

Men are born into the necessity of conducting business, that, like mighty rivers, has its channels and its currents, and is apt to sweep men down stream, making it almost impossible for them to cross it, or to go up stream.

These are facts. They are facts which cannot be gainsaid. They are facts which will impress you more and more as you study them. The student of human nature, and especially the preacher, who undertakes to trace and follow out the influences which are in operation among men, cannot help seeing that they are facts. And so far from having exaggerated them, I have understated them.

Consider, then, how impossible, under such circumstances, it will be for a man to find his own way to manhood. When it is said, "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him," men sometimes think it is a very hard saying; but is it not a saying of the truth? When you come to think how men are born, how weak they are, and what influences are around about them, you might as well set a little child five years old on the shore of the Pacific ocean, and say to it, "Find your way across the plains, across the mountains, across the streams, across the morasses, across everything that intervenes, to the Atlantic ocean," as to tell a man in this world to find his way through all the intricacies of life to his true manhood. Could that child find its way except there were some one to take it in his arms, and lead it, and encourage its little footsteps? Would it not perish in the great wilderness before reaching the place for which it set out?

And in human life, proud as men are, and vain as they become, by their knowledge and intelligence spanning rivers with bridges that are wonderful, boring mountains, which is strange as compared with past ignorance, doing things in matter which set them up in conceit of themselves, the great question that concerns every man is, "How shall I develop manhood in myself?" That is a question about which human knowledge is very limited, about which every man is sadly ignorant, and which no man has in himself the power to explain.

And here comes in the doctrine of the Divine Spirit, of the influence of the Holy Ghost—that enlightening, teaching, guiding influence by which men are lifted up above the lower conditions of their life; by which there is a path laid, into which their feet are guided, though they themselves may know it not.

Consider, again, the case of those who have truly entered into this new life, which is ministered by the Spirit of God to men. I have said that the natural man is not able to discern the things of the Spirit. I have said that such are the circumstances and such are the facts of his existence, that a man, without the influence of the Holy Spirit will never find his way up from the animal spheres of life into a true spiritual manhood in Christ Jesus. But, consider, when a man has begun, under the influence of the Divine Spirit to live this higher life, how dense the darkness still is, and how profound is the ignorance still, which hang around him, and make it necessary that there should be some help from above. How ignorant are men of the special methods of treating their own faculties. We generally go by empirical rules—very seldom by philosophical principles.

A man is very quick-tempered. He hopes he is converted. He joins the church. He goes back to his household a better man. He knows very well that one of his besetting sins is that inflammatory, explosive temper of his. He wishes to overcome that temper. He is a man that makes a great deal too much blood. He is a man whose nerves are rendered supersensitive by the overcharging of his system.

Now, there are two instructors that would come to such a man—his moral instructor, and his physical instructor. His physician would say to him, "Sir, you are a person who should never indulge in the stimulation of meats. Already you are overcharged with blood, and your brain is undergoing a process of unwholesome stimulation; and what you call temper is oftentimes the cry of nature in distress. Reduce your diet. Bring your body into a cooler and calmer state."

Then comes the moral instructor. He says, "The way to overcome your temper is to bring it under the dominion of some faculty that is stronger than it." The man does not need to deal with his temper so much as to take the antagonist of that temper and give it a controlling power. What he wants is to bring into ascendency that part of the mind which shall forestall the action of his temper.

But what does many a man do who has not the benefit of these instructors? He prays that he may be delivered from temper. That is very good as far as it goes; but if I take a penknife and pray that when I draw it across my finger it shall not cut, I do not think that there will be any answer to my prayer. If a man who is irritable from over-feeding, prays before breakfast that God will take care of his temper, and then fills himself full at breakfast, I do not think that he will have an answer to his prayer. If a man who is accustomed to the use of intoxicating drinks, prays that he may be kept cool and calm all day, and then takes down a glass of liquor, I do not think that his prayer will be answered. Here are physical and psychological conditions on which temper is excited or allayed; and though prayer is good, knowledge ought to be at the bottom of every prayer. Yet, how many who wish to lead a Christian life, and whose temper stands in their way, undertake to overcome it by methods which are neither founded upon knowledge nor upon good judgment! How many there are who attempt to control their temper by watching it! And what can a man accomplish by watching his temper? He has so much to do that he cannot think about it day by day, and all the time; and he can only now and then turn his attention to it. Watching a man's temper is like watching fire-crackers when mischievous boys are touching them off. While you are looking at one

here, another goes off there; and while you are looking at that there, another goes off yonder.

A man goes into the world, and there are those little slow-matches leading out from him; and circumstances touch them off right and left; and when he is watching his temper on one side, it goes off on the other side; and he gets discouraged, finally, and says, "I do not know, but it seems to me as though I were not a Christian, and as though God does not mean that I shall be one. I have made the utmost struggle for five years, and I do not see that, after all my endeavors during that time, I am one bit nearer to gentleness and meekness and patience than I was before." But at last the man is sixty, or seventy, or seventy-five years of age, and the machinery of his body is much worn, and that supply which feeds the appetites and passions is greatly diminished, and his once fiery temper has become cooled down, because he feels the breath of the other world coming upon him; and he begins to think that a great triumph of grace has been wrought in him. And other people say, "What a great change has come over him! How sweet he has become! How calm he is!" Why should he not be, now that he is nearly worn out?

The wheel of a mill, not being oiled, groans and creaks, groans and creaks, all night long; and there are two ways of curing it. One is to pour oil on it; and the other is to stop it, and let it stand still.

There is an oil of grace that will enable a man to cure the infirmity of temper, if he knows how to take it and pour it on. That may be employed; or the infirmity of temper may be cured by stopping the wheels of life and letting them stand still. Many of our graces, late sown and late reaped, are nothing but decadencies. They are the working out of that which in the midst of our vitality and vigor gave us so much trouble. But how much do men know of this when they undertake to cultivate graces? While they are dealing with generic things they do not have much trouble; but when they come to things specific they are in perplexity. A man says, "How shall I have faith? You speak of imagination; and you speak of rapture of emotion. Now, I am calmer and cooler than you are. And I know visible qualities. But how shall I have faith to discern things which are invisible? How shall I have an imagination that shall flash things out into the pathless air as your's does?" I cannot instruct you how. I do not know of any man that can instruct you how. A man says, "I am naturally doubting and fearing; I am naturally skeptical; I am naturally reluctant to give assent to anything that is not proved. Will you tell me how to become childlike and confiding?" I could say, "Pray for that which you desire." I could say, "Seek it through Divine guidance." But what instruction would

that be? What philosophic direction, what working pattern would I give him in that advice? How many good men, how many conscientious men, how many godly men, know enough of the mind to change one mood into another, and take that and exalt it above all others, and so control the lower elements of the mind by the higher?

How little do men know what is the matter with them! And if they knew what was the matter, they would not be as well off as the doctors are now. There are certain classes of diseases that doctors can cure. There are certain other classes that they can cure sometimes. And there are certain other classes—those that are the most intricate—which the doctor knows about only when the man is dead, and he opens him and sees what has killed him. And how much more obscure are these internal facts of psychology! The sicknesses of the soul are beyond the knowledge of any of us. We do not understand even the lowest forms of them. We are all of us quacks. And there is more significance in the term "foolishness of preaching," than men—especially ministers—are apt to think. There is a vast deal of moralizing and instruction on this subject; but how little of it comes home, so that a man feels, "That meets my case; that solves my difficulty; that shows me what my necessity is: now I know what my tendencies are, and I can act accordingly"? How many can furnish themselves with light on such matters, or can find anybody that can furnish it for them?

Still more, how ignorant are we of the relations of daily experience to our spiritual good! We are all of us under the impulse of great natural affections which are stimulating us to industry and enterprise. One man is pursuing success in one direction, and another man in another direction. Human society is a great room, a vast workshop, where all lawful industry is carried on. Business is a means of grace designed to wake up man's understanding and ingenuity and patience and hope, and to bring out power in the whole inward man. But in seeking these things which are, in a general way, a moral education, one man is overwhelmed with difficulties. He is discouraged He is beaten down. He is driven hither and thither upon misfortunes and disasters, as a ship is driven upon the shore by winds.

No man finds prosperity abounding. And how many can form any estimate as to whether it is best for them to be prosperous or not?

If I should consult the wheat that is growing in Spring in the field as to what was best for it, the wheat would say, "Let me alone. Let the rain feed me. Let the winds gently strengthen me. Let me grow to my full height and size." But ah! the land on which

that wheat is sown is over-rich; and if the wheat grows to its full height and size, it will be so fat and heavy that it will break and fall down, and be lost. So the farmer turns in his cattle, and they browse the wheat. They eat it down to the ground. And by and by, later, when it is allowed to grow, it has been so weakened by this cruel pasturage that it will not become so rank as to break down, but will stand erect, and carry its heads up, and ripen its grain.

Many men will bear browsing. They get too fat, and cannot carry themselves upright and firm, and they break and fall down; and the best part of them lies in the dirt; and all that stands up is straw and stubble.

There is another field where the wheat, if I were to say to it, "What is best for you?" perhaps, hearing my discourse on the other field, might say, from an amiable motive, "Let me alone." But ah! that happens to be a field where the soil is poor, and where it has been poorly tilled, and where, if the prayer of the wheat should be heeded, and it should be let alone, it would not have strength enough to grow, and would only have a starveling life, and would bear no harvest. So the farmer says, "Give it ample top-dressing. Bring in your guano." Here is a field that has need of strength to enable it to carry its crop on to ripeness and perfection. Here there is no danger of the crop growing rank, and falling down, and leaving nothing but straw.

And so it is with men. But who knows what is best for him? Some men can endure prosperity, and some cannot; but who can discriminate between them?

It is said that there are men who will take a stick in their hand and go over a piece of ground and tell where a well ought to be dug, because the stick is drawn toward the appropriate place—(you can believe this if you have a mind to). The stick, it seems, knows more than the men do, and by turning over, indicates the appointed spot. But it sometimes hits, and sometimes misses. There are, however, some places where the ground is full of springs, so that wherever the stick goes, it never misses.

But there are no such necromancers of the soil of the soul. No man can tell where God's well of salvation is to be dug in him; and almost every man tries to shield and cover up that flood from whence God will bring out the water of the soul.

When God comes to one man, and empties his coffers, he cries out, "O Lord! not here, not here. Dig not thy well here. Here is where my gold, my treasure, is. This is my life!" But still, down goes the pick; down goes the drill. Where he needed it most, and where he wanted it least, there God digs.

Another man says, "If God had taken all I had, I would not have cared much about that. If it had only been my houses and lands, I should have been content. But it was my cradle!" Oh! yes, that was just where God knew that the well of salvation ought to be sunk; and there he dug; and he made the man deeper and richer.

Says another man, "Oh! if God had only taken him in the cradle! But he kept him alive; and he has been a drunkard; and he has laid upon me heavier than mountains. I would that he had spared me the pain of carrying this sorrow all my life long." How little you know what is for your good. God knows where to strike, that he may open in you "a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Who knows, but God? Who can form an estimate for himself? Who for his children? Who for his best beloved?

When you have lived twenty years, and thirty years, and forty years, and fifty years, and, as I have, nearly sixty years, and find that then you do not know any better about these things than you did when you began your career, you will exclaim, "How strange this is!"

What a thing human life is! What a mystery man is! How wonderful is the way in which he is thrust into life! How marvelous is the blundering way in which he gropes through life, like a man in an unknown room, awakened from sleep suddenly in the night, stumbling over everything, and finding out by his accidents what he learns.

Now, then, let us read and see if there is not something in this text:

"Likewise the Spirit [God's great luminous Spirit] also helpeth our infirmities."

Oh! in that word *infirmities*, how large a part of human life is included! How much of what men call faults, how much of what men call sins, and how much, also, of what men call crimes and vices, will God, in the greatness of his love and mercy, call infirmities.

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought."

"Yes, I do," says one. "I pray for clothes; and I pray for bread. Christ told me to; and I say, 'Give us this day our daily bread.'" Ah! but that is low-down prayer. That is the animal crying out for animal wants. And when you come to the higher thought (for Paul had been running a parallel between the animal and the man, between the flesh and the spirit); when you come to the other view of the subject, you have the revelation that the lower nature does not know how to pray for the supernal manhood; that it does not know what

things to add nor what things to take away; that it does not know whether to pray for more or for less, for the higher or for the lower, for this, that, or the other training. It does not know what to ask for as it ought.

Now comes the remainder:

"But the Spirit itself maketh intercession in us [*for us*, it is here; but the force of it in the original is *in us*, or *through us*] with groanings which cannot be uttered."

What are we to understand by that? I understand this: that there is a divine influence which is moving upon men, and which is developing itself in the form of yearnings, and of vague aspirations, and of spiritual longings, for which we can have no expression; and that these yearnings and longings are the product of God's spirit in us, dwelling in us, stimulating us, exciting us. This is the evidence of his presence, that there is that vital longing, that incessant yearning, for something higher and better, "with groanings which cannot be uttered," with soul moanings—the most affecting of all things.

There is nothing that touches one more than a moan that does not want to moan. The shrieks and implorations of suffering wildly uttered, the outcries of suffering that might, perhaps, be bravely borne, shock us, but do not touch us affectingly. But when you see a reserve of self-control, or when one thinks himself out from under observation, and you hear him utter a suppressed sigh that in another would resound out into the proportions of a moan; or when you hear one that is asleep moan; or when you see a little child that with the faintest cry catches its breath, then you are deeply affected. What mother does not run to the cradle, and what mother's tone does not show how quick she is touched by the mystery of life that is going on in the child, when she hears it sobbing in its sleep! "What ails the darling? What is it dreaming of?"

The mother looks upon the child, under such circumstances, very much as God looks on mankind, whom he sees groping and striving, and coming no nearer to finding the way than men in the woods do, who have no guide, who know not the road, to whom no house is visible, and who have nothing by which to direct their course. God sees men struggling, and hears them groaning toward the great hereafter, ignorant of how to control the forces that are around about them so as to secure what is best for them. And it is God's Spirit dwelling in such men that sets them to longing and yearning. And all those longings and yearnings in men, which cannot voice themselves, which cannot form themselves into confessions or supplications, God knows how to answer. And he knows how to guide men so that the feelings which they do not know how to express, shall be efficacious though unexpressed.

Here, so far as the unfolding of the text is concerned, we stay.

I remark, in the first place, in view of this statement, that if this welling up of the innermost nature is praying, if this desiring and yearning of the soul is true prayer, if that is the best praying which has the fewest words, which has the most longing, which has the deepest feeling and the least vocalization, it is a matter of fact that very few pray out of their manhood, and very many pray out of their animal-hood. Think of the things that you ask for, think of the things that you desire, analyze your prayers, and you will see that this is so. When you are alarmed, you pray; when something threatens you, you pray. When your prosperity slackens, you pray. When danger impends, you pray. When pain begins to shoot through you fiery signals of approaching dissolution, you pray. When your child is sick, you pray. When trouble comes into your household, you pray. When you have borne your burdens as long as you can, you begin to pray. Your lower life prays. There would be no harm in that if it were only the bass, as it were, to the melody of prayer above. But how few there are who actually pray out of their higher reason, out of their faith, out of their hope, out of their conscience, out of their love, out of their whole supernal nature! How few pray with such intensity that, aside from the general yearnings inspired by the spirit of God, they are filled with the Holy Ghost! How few there are whose hearts yearn toward men, toward heaven and toward God, so that they are caught up by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and led to the fulfillment of their prayers!

Brethren, our prayers are very low, very sordid, very secular. They are of the earth, earthy. And there are those who have complained that their life of prayer was limited. There are those who have felt and said that they could not utter prayers. Prayers precomposed for them were like ready-made garments that did not fit; and the prayers ordinarily uttered seem to them still less profitable. But they say, "While I work, my heart goes out in prayer. I hardly know what I pray for; but my heart communes heavenward." And others say, "When I walk in the fields, I pray; and such praying is the only prayer that I know. The moment I kneel down, and the formality of prayer is imposed upon me, I lose the spirit of prayer." And people say to them, "There is something wrong about you. If you were right, the moment it was twelve, at noon, you would feel prayer struck out of you, as the hours are struck off by a clock, and you would go down on your knees, and open your lips, and pray." That may be easy for some folks, but it is not possible for me. I never could pray so. Clock-work is very good in its place,

but I do not think that the heart and the affections were made to go by clock-work.

If when I go home my heart is toward my household, I can express feeling toward them; but if I come home wearied, or clouded, or obscured and bondaged by other thoughts, I cannot, simply because I have gone home, open like a flower and exhale the fragrance of affection in the family. My feelings of affection do not flow, simply because I come to the spot and the time. There is a mood as well as an hour, which has to do with prayer.

There are those who say, "I cannot, even when I am moved by the Spirit of God, utter prayer. My prayer is prayer of thought and feeling." Do not look askance upon them, as though that were no prayer. They do pray; and oftentimes that is the deepest and the most Divinely inspired prayer. At any rate, while I would not dissuade you from praying regularly, at set times of devotion, nor from uttering prayer if occasion serve, I would say: Preserve, as a part, and as the most precious part, of your relig ous experience, those yearnings and aspirations which have no words. Do you walk in the fields, and, looking up to the heavens, do you feel that something is lifting you toward a higher sphere? It is God that is drawing you upward. There is not a tendency of the soul to go above the flesh and the appetites and to lift you to a higher life, that is not of God. Every impulse of this kind shows that the Spirit is speaking in you and with you. Therefore, yield to it. Let it gush forth.

I remark once more, that nothing so impresses me with the necessity of prayer, and nothing so comforts me, as the conviction of the reality that there is a great heart above us, doing for men more than they do for themselves, and more than they can recognize as being done for them. When I see how men live, when I see how ignorant they are, when I see how, as I have attempted faintly to delineate, they wander upon unknown ways, I wonder that anybody is saved; I wonder that there is any goodness in life. But I do not wonder when I think that in the divine Providence there is a Heart that sits like a mother in the household.

Here are children—five, six, seven. They are surrounded by a thousand implements of mischief. The circumstances are such as tend to lead them into mischief. They, all of them, are filled with selfishness and pride and vanity, and other feelings of the lower nature, which are ready to explode at the slightest touch. At the merest provocation they would naturally get angry and snatch and scratch and quarrel. And yet, all day long there is harmony in that little band. Who chords it? What keeps those children in a

peaceful and happy state of mind from morning till night? They do not know it, but it is the forethought of the mother. It is the touching of this one's disposition, and that one's disposition, first on this side and then on that, it is the wise administration of love in the household, which keeps everything moving harmoniously. The children do not know how to take care of themselves; and there are many little temptations to wrangle with each other, but there sits the mother, who, without any apparent show of superiority, governs them in their play. There is an atmosphere thrown off from the mother's heart which keeps the whole household in order; and all progresses regularly and happily.

Just so God presides among men. In the household of faith his great father-heart pours out love that fills and stains the atmosphere more than the sun stains royally the clouds. He thinks for us in such a manner that he is able to say, "All things shall work together for good to them that love me." He thinks for us more wisely than we can think for ourselves.

And he lifts us up into that higher realm in which we rejoice that he thinks for others as well as for us. I think I should die, almost, if I did not feel, "It is not me alone that God thinks for." I believe there is a Heart that presides over the ages. I believe that God administers for the human race. And although, when I look out upon the darkness of the outspread family of man, and see how ignorant and helpless men are, through the many successive gradations, all the way up to where the light plays on the dome of Christian faith, it is enough to sink my hope in the depths of the sea, yet I find rest in God. I find rest in believing that there is a divine love which guides the race and the world. I find rest in that which mere philosophers never knew, and which cannot be found out by any empirical process of living—namely, that the heart of God guides everything; that he will subdue everything to himself; that *every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Lord to the glory of God.* Blessed truth! Pluck from me the thought of a Father God, and of a loving Heart that carries power, and that knows how by pain and joy alike to build up, chastise and guide; take me away from that central thought, and the whole world would collapse, and there would be no more comfort in life for me. I would go in despair to them that dig graves, and say, "Hide me; for life is too heavy, and its clouds are too murky, and its sorrows are too many." But if God lives, and his name is love, and his government is infinite, and I may believe that out of darkness he will bring light, and that all things at last shall praise him, then I will yet with cheer carry forward my labor, and will bear my burdens with-

out complaint. For I shall know that however dark the cloud may be, behind it is light. *Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.*

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, we rejoice that thou knowest what we have need of—food and raiment and shelter; all providential mercies. The necessities which spring from our outward life are before thee; and thou hast ordained the forces of nature; and they are fulfilling thy will perpetually. There is light for the eye, and sound for the ear, and breath for the life; and all the sources of men's prosperous life are at hand; and we flourish in body, and are made continually rich and happy by thy goodness to us. But how shall we be fed with that other bread? How shall we live in that deeper life? How shall we know what we need there? How shall we ask acceptably except by the inbreathing of thy spirit. Guide, then, by the Holy Spirit, our thoughts and our feelings, and give expression to those nameless desires which rise so often within us. And we beseech of thee, O Lord our God! that we may know how to aspire upward, by thy blessed Spirit, toward all things which are pure, and all things which are excellent, and all things which are in symmetry, and all things which are like to thee, and which shall bring thee into accord with us.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that same compassion upon us which thou hast in our vain and aimless struggle, in all useless suffering, and in all that chastisement of suffering which is made needful by our vagrancy. In our mistake and our sin, still deal with us tenderly In infinite patience thou hast dealt with the world; and if it is to be saved, it must needs be by that same patience still unrolled; still carrying forward the race in the midst of blindness and ignorance and helplessness.

O Lord! our help is from thee. From thee come life and light. From thee comes power. From thee come all motive and instruction. And we look to thee for that inward light and guidance by which alone we shall ever become the sons of God.

We thank thee that there are so many who have begun this life; and though none have it yet royally within them, we thank thee that there are so many who begin to know something of the spirit of adoption; who are able to draw near to thee with humble boldness; who live in the consciousness of thy sympathy for them; who are able from day to day to cast their care upon thee; who are able from day to day to live in the spirit of children that trust and love. And we thank thee that there are so many added to them from time to time. Increase the number, we beseech of thee, of those that are in spirit and temper, in life and character, sons of God.

And we pray that thou wilt make the truth powerful upon the hearts of all. May those that are living in a low estate, far from God, and in outward righteousness, be greatly quickened; and may their desires be deepened, and their life lifted up to a higher and nobler plane.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that the truth, to-night, may reach the hearts of those who are not followers of the Lord; who seek their own way; who fulfill the lusts of the flesh; who live for the pride of the eye and the vanity of the heart—for transient things; things that perish in the using; things that cannot go with them further than the grave, and that

must be left behind when their freed spirits go forth into the eternity of their existence. Grant that there may be very serious thoughts by serious minds here to-night. Grant that many may be quickened to ask for their own souls' welfare, and to know how it fares with them. And since thou art sitting upon the mediatorial throne; since thou art merciful and forgiving, may none be unwilling to confess their sin. May every one be willing to know the thing that is within him—the evil heart of unbelief, the enmity of the flesh and of the spirit, to the Son of God. And we beseech of thee that there may be heart-searchings and turnings, on the part of those who now are in darkness and wind and fire and flood, from those devouring elements.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who labor in our midst, and those who go forth among the poor and needy, to do the works of Christ upon their hearts. More and more accompany them. And grant, we pray thee, that the light of thy countenance and of love may win many and many to the knowledge of that Source of love whom we worship.

We pray that thou wilt bless all thy churches of every name. Unite them together more and more in a true divine spirit. And may the things which divide us seem of less and less account, and the things which unite us become more and more important in our estimation. And at last may there be harmony throughout the whole world. And may the church set the example in this great work of harmonization. And we pray that there may be a time when there shall not be warrings among thy people, nor among nations; when ignorance shall be chased away by knowledge; when the true faith shall take the place of superstition; when all power shall be in rightful hands; when all men shall be too just to oppress, and when all men shall be too strong to be oppressed, and when all the earth shall be filled with gladness and purity and peace. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou will bless the word which has been spoken; and grant that it may arouse in us a more earnest desire to be led of God. May we not seek to shield our hearts from the light that is shining from within. May we desire, above all things, to be the children of the Spirit. May we learn not to lean upon pride, nor to trust in our conceit. May we learn to lean upon thee. Without thee we can do nothing; we are orphans, fatherless. Lord Jesus, lead us to the Father. Holy Spirit, open our understanding, and our inward life and light, and bring us to that supernal manhood, by which we shall be called rightfully the children of God. Lead us while we live; appoint our way; apportion our burdens and our discipline. O, stand thou Beloved One, and look forth upon us from the Heavenly gate, clearer than the pearl, brighter than the golden street, sweeter than all the voices that call, saying, Come. Thou art to us, O, Saviour of the soul! the Knowing that guides the unknowing. Stand thou waiting for us till our time shall come, till thy heart needs us; then send the welcome messenger and call thy children home. And in thy presence, when we shall see thee as thou art, and know as we are known, we will cast our crowns at thy feet, saying "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory, forever and ever." *Amen.*

THE ORIGINAL

PLYMOUTH PULPIT

SERMONS OF

HENRY WARD BEECHER

In Plymouth Church, Brooklyn

FROM STENOGRAPHIC REPORTS BY T. J. ELLINWOOD

VOLUME VI.

MARCH TO SEPTEMBER, 1871

NEW YORK
FORDS, HOWARD, & HULBERT
1893

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1871,
BY J. B. FORD & CO.,
in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

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GOD'S DISINTERESTEDNESS.

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."—MATT. v., 48.

I suspect that almost every one reads this merely as a command that we should become perfect persons. And very many suppose it to be a command that we shall be as perfect as God is—that the measure of perfection in us shall be as complete as is the measure of perfection in God.

In the first place, the command, *Be ye therefore perfect*, is not to be considered in a rigidly imperative sense. It is not, in other words, to be supposed that perfection can be attained by men with the mode of organization employed in their creation, in their relations to this world, in their relations to social life, and in their relations to God and the future. It is not to be supposed that the perfect outline which is to be filled up before we can be perfect is the creature of volition. It is not to be supposed that a man can be perfect simply by willing to be perfect; or, that perfection is a state wrought in men by a supernal power, with instantaneousness, with miraculousness, if I may so call it. It is not the supposition that men, being called from darkness to light, can, either by the force of their own will, or by the overwhelming power of the Divine Spirit, rise suddenly into conditions of spiritual perfection. For everywhere throughout the Bible there is the recognition of that which we find always to be the fact, that even under the best conditions men reach toward perfection by growth.

"Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

But growth is in its nature gradual. It is a process of gradual evolution. And it is said, even of Christ himself, that *he was made perfect, though a Son, by the things which he suffered.*

He developed in his mortal state by assuming conditions of mortality. He became subject to this law of gradual development; and he *grew* in knowledge and stature, and in favor with God and man, and in the elements of wisdom and goodness. And that which was true of the Saviour, was true of the apostles. And that which was

SUNDAY MORNING, Mar. 12, 1871. LESSON: GAL. V. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 173, 648. 680.

true of the apostles, has been true of good men in every age since that time. They have come gradually, and through a process of education, into the higher conditions of a spiritual life. So it is not to be supposed that we are commanded, by a jump, to come to that which experience teaches us we can come to only by growth—by gradual succession.

We might, therefore, give to this *Be ye*, the force of *Strive to be*. This is a general command implying that an action is already set on foot. It implies that this is a thing to be done in your seeking to be perfect. The spirit of the passage is, Be perfect *as*, or *according to the manner in which*, God himself chooses to be perfect. Do not fall on the wrong model. Do not have a false conception of the direction in which you are to seek your true manhood. It is not this: Be *as* perfect as God is. That is a wrong interpretation of it. It is not this: Be just as full and just as complete in perfection as God is. It is this: Take the divine notion of what perfection is, and attempt to be perfect according to that notion, and not according to the mere question of fullness, largeness, symmetry, and so on. Look at the context, and you will see that this is the true construction which I have given.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans [the worst sort of men] the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

That is the way in which he is perfect. Disinterestedness is the perfection which is meant. He makes his sun to rise upon the just and upon the unjust. He loves the unlovely. He does good to the undeserving. And when you undertake to be perfect, remember the *way* in which God himself is perfect, and be perfect according to that manner. It is an exhortation to disinterested benevolence as a supreme ideal, both of divine perfection, and of individual perfection.

A little more lengthy consideration of this will, perhaps, give us a power of inference which we could not otherwise get.

You have heard that it has been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, because there is good reason for it. Either he is lovable, or he loves you; or he has performed kindly offices toward you. There you have a motive. You have been taught to hate your enemy because he is ugly; because he is unjust; because he stirs you up wickedly and wrongfully. And there is a motive and a reason. But Christ says, "I declare that you are to love your enemies."

How can a man love his enemy? He is wrong; and can a man love that which is wrong? He is directing that wrong so that it becomes keenly appreciated by me because it is measured by my own sensitive selfness, if not selfishness; and are we commanded to love a man so? He maligns me. He follows me. He curtails my comfort. He destroys my usefulness. He embitters my life. He vexes my friends. He weakens my standing. He throws around about me a malignant glamour. And what motive, what inspiration is there that shall enable me to love any man who is, in his declared conduct, and in his whole attitude, hostile to me? How can a man love hatefulness?—especially hatefulness active, and addressing itself directly to me? It cannot be done.

Yet Christ says, "Love not those that are lovely alone: love the unlovely; and love them in their most active form. Unlovely people that are brought right home to you in personal contact and conflict—love them. Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you. Those that have in them that hate which is of the fire of hell, and which shall consume and burn and destroy—do good to them. And do it that you may become like God; that is, that you may become the children of your Father, which is in heaven."

And in order that he may not be misunderstood, he says, "This is what God is doing. He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good [in his career over the world, the sun sees many more men that do not deserve his blessing than those that do, and still he shines on with a bounty of light, and has done so through ages]; and he sendeth his rain, not according to men's deserts, but on the just and on the unjust alike."

Men are accustomed, when they state their distinctions, keeping up their ideas of moral government, to say that God does send his natural bounties on men without any regard to character; but that he cannot be understood to send his personal favors and his spiritual favors upon men without any regard to character. But that is not the question at all. The Saviour is endeavoring to teach this point: "When you attempt to form an ideal of manhood and true character, you must take God's character as a pattern. You are to love that which is hateful and that which is oppugnant to you. You are to bless those that curse you, and forgive those that hate you. Ideally, you must raise up in your mind a picture of what God's character is, and you must attempt to be perfect according to that character."

This is not a delineation of the divine moral government, but a declaration of what the constituent elements of the divine character are. And that declaration is that those elements are disinterested goodness, divine benevolence, and kindness to the undeserving. That

is the type of God's character—if there can be such a thing as a type spoken of where there is but one.

Here, then, we have, by the hand of Christ himself, an authoritative, and explicit, and incontrovertible declaration, that this is an attribute of the divine nature, and that it is the very point in the divine nature which we are to recognize as the model for our imitation. God's nature, in other words, is such that he does good, not because men are good, and not because they deserve that which is good, but simply because *He* is good. And it is this that I want to dwell upon at some length.

God does not love men because they are amiable. He does not confer gifts upon men because they deserve them, or have earned them. He confers them because the fullness of his own nature needs expression. It is the outward pressure in himself of vast love and beneficence that wants expression. And he sends that love and beneficence abroad. He does good to people in heaven and on earth, and will, to all eternity, because there is such a fullness of this need in himself, working out in the happiness and benefaction of his creatures.

Can we understand this? Yes. We see it in life. The highest form of any faculty is that in which the force of the feelings gives it an automatic development. That is a low condition of faculty which requires to be solicited and brought out by something that is presented to it. And in men, where any part of their nature is highly organized; where they have, as we say, *eminent gifts;* where they have first-class endowments, the token of it is that the faculty, or power, or whatever you choose to call it, is in such a condition that it does not need any outward solicitation to develop it—that it develops itself from the nature that is in it.

Thus, for example, there is in some natures such a large organized tendency to music that they develop music, not because some one asks them to, not because if they do it may give them fame or reputation; but because it is there, and demands expression. It does not need outward solicitation. They *think* music; they *sing.* Why? Because it is in them to do it. Because they want to, in themselves. There is many a person who, if you were to put him on an island in the ocean, where there was no soul but himself, would be thinking choruses and symphonies. He could not help it. This is something that works out from the inside. It is inspiration. It is automatic. It is self-moving.

So it is with poetry. There are many men who write poetry, just as farmers raise corn, and send it to market. Some think that they will make money by it; some think that they will make fame by it; and

they sweat, and tug, and make poetry by the hardest. There are others through whose whole lives there is a tinge of poetic color in almost every thought; and at times there will be hours of rapture. They cannot help it. They see visions, and they dream dreams; and their thoughts flow musically, and almost in numbers. We call them inspired. We say that they are men of genius.

What do you mean by *men of genius?* I mean this: that where a man has any faculty that is carried above the middle line, so that it is self-moved, he has genius. Genius, and genius only, enables a man to be creative. If any man has faculties that are automatic in their action, and that develop themselves, not by outward solicitation, but according to some inward invitation or want, he has in him the elements of an inventor. Many persons invent because they are asked to, or because they are stirred up to. Others invent because invention is in them. It is their nature to be fruitful in that way.

Now, many men are benevolent because they are provoked to benevolence; and many others are benevolent because they are so full of kindness and love that these qualities flow from them steadily, as silver streams flow out of the sides of mountains.

So on persons that are called good-natured, good dinners have a pleasing influence. Good luck has a very cheering influence on them. Some rare stroke of fortune comes to them, and they are eminently good-natured. And you can tell the reason why. But there are good-natured men about whom you never think of asking the reason why. They are always so. They cannot be any different. The current runs spontaneously in that direction in them. They cannot help it.

Some men are benevolent at intervals. Some are benevolent when the proper time comes round, and they are never benevolent at any other times. But there are persons who are bathed in an atmosphere of benevolence, and are never out of it. Benevolence is in them by original organization and tendency.

This is what we call *inspiration*, or *genius*. It is a certain fullness of nature that leads action to be from within outward, and, from the reason of inwardness, so full and sensitive that it shows itself in outward action. It is the highest conception among men. There is no faculty that men love to praise more than genius. It stands superior to all other conditions of the faculties. And it points to this conception of the divine nature. It points to the same thing in God—a Being whose attributes are so full and so sensitive that they do not need the solicitation of outward circumstances. The divine Heart pours forth its bounty from reasons that are in itself—from its infinite fullness, its infinite necessity, and not from

its self-love, as we do in a lower sphere, and according to the laws of that lower sphere.

The imperfect moral conditions in us know something of what it is to have spontaneity and overflow of life and inspiration; and carrying that ideal up, and enlarging it to the full measure of all the attributes of God, we perceive that he sits in the heaven, eternally willing, thinking, governing, by the outflow of a nature righteous, pure, holy, just and good, and moved, not by argument, nor by persuasion, nor by inspection, but by an infinite necessity in himself to pour out the goodness and the fullness that is in him.

Look at the thought of the Apocalypse, where the throne is described, and where it is said that out from under it proceeds the river of life, and that on either side of it are trees whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. It is as if it had been said, "The life of God (for *Throne* means God) who sits there, flows like a river."

A river, according to our way of looking at it, is that which has in itself its own motion, as it were. Its power is not derived from the will of man. It is not the miller that coaxes the river to flow by his mill: it is the river that coaxes the miller to set himself down on its bank with his mill. It is its nature which gives it automatic power. It has its rise in the mountains, and streams flow down to form it, and it has a power of its own by which it flows on and pours out its waters into the ocean or the lake. In summer and in winter, through all time, it pursues its course from a force which is inherent in itself. And so through ages the old Amazon has poured its mighty flood into the Atlantic; and the Mississippi has emptied its vast volumes into the Gulf; and the St. Lawrence has flowed into the upper ocean, melting myriads of tons of ice. And they are forever flowing. And God sits with an inexhaustible stream of benevolence flowing out from under his throne. All that vast treasure of sympathy and love; all things which go to constitute the highest Fatherhood, are represented as coming forth from under the throne of God. And all those things that grow on the banks of the river of life, and whose leaves are said to be for the healing of the nations, are represented as issuing from beneath the throne.

Or, take the favorite image of our God as a *Sun*. It is said of Christ, "He is the light of the world." Consider that the sun is not an orb that shines because it is solicited. Consider that fire is not struck out of him as men strike fire out of a flint. We do not get flame from the sun as men get flame by rubbing a match. The sun is a globe of heat and fire that, in an incessant stream, pours out and radiates from itself these boundless stores of light and heat.

And God forever radiates, sends from himself, from the necessity of His nature, these boundless stores of beneficence.

This is the Being that presides central throughout the whole universe. He is not One that is to be conceived of according to the penurious, beggarly notion of an earthly monarch. He is not one who needs to be approached, to be worshiped, to be solicited, in order to be kept good-natured. He is not one that gives upon a consideration of the desert of the recipient. The true idea is, that God is a Being who sits in the center of the universe, with a nature so full of all bounty that it has an endless flow, and is like a river that, through summer and winter, and through ages unnumbered, moves steadily on. He is the Regent, the Center of all things; and from him all things proceed.

When, therefore, we are commanded to be like God, it is not meant that we should be as large as he is, nor as wise as he is. It is not even meant that we shall be symmetrical as he is. It is not meant that we shall be perfect as God is in any artistic sense. This is what is meant: If you would imitate God aright, remember that he loves unlovely beings; remember that he forgives hateful folks, who do not deserve forgiveness; remember that it is not the bountiful alone to whom God gives; remember that the stingy old miser receives the rain and the sunlight as much as the philanthropist.

I think everybody feels, at once, "Why, these do not deserve it!" No; but God's nature is such that he outpours his own feelings, so that the good and the bad get his bounty; so that the just and the unjust get it. And you cannot get away from it. There it is declared by our Lord Jesus Christ that the pattern which you are to imitate is God's nature in this thing, that he makes his sun to rise on the good and on the bad, and that he sends his rain on the just and on the unjust alike.

The doctrine to which I beg to call your attention, is that the truest and noblest conception of moral quality is one that has the reason of its being and action in itself, and not in that which is outside of it. It is disinterested, in other words.

I shall not now risk the strength of this subject by undertaking to square it by the proper pattern of the schools. I shall not qualify these statements by saying that God has a personal partiality which proceeds on a divine pattern. In other words, I shall not attempt to show that God, in forming friendships, in selecting his personal companions from among men, if I may so say, does it on the divine principle of moral loveliness. I suggest that there is a subject in this direction, but that ought to be treated by itself; and you might better have this other side exaggerated, than not to have it in your

mind at all, or to have it there in a form that is comparatively weak.

I remark, then, in view of this explanation.

1. This is the distinctive peculiarity of God's nature which was thought of by our Saviour, which he emphasized, and which he held up for us to imitate—goodness from his own love of goodness. We cheat ourselves because our ideal of God is erroneous. We fall into endless mistakes in regard to human conduct because we fail to perceive this peculiar feature of God's character—that he does kindnesses, that he acts kindly, because he himself hungers to be kind. It is the efflux and proper expression of his own nature. And this kindness, this goodness, is to be in us.

Compare this with the notions which are prevalent. What is goodness? An ascetic will tell you that the proper idea of the Christian state is to deny yourself in every possible way; to mortify the flesh, and the passions and appetites of it; to circumscribe your enjoyment; not to be seduced by any evils; to live in a state of perpetual cross-bearing and self-denial, with tears and groans and anguish, that you may at last be found fit to enter into the kingdom of God. It is *false!* It is a *lie!* and the worst kind of a lie, because it is against the genius of the universe; because it is in opposition to the very marrow of the Gospel—if men are, in God's providence, ordained to work out the problem. Our sins and troubles are to bring tears and sorrows, to be sure; but it is not the distinctive characteristic of Christianity, that a man is to have an ascetic love for pain and sorrow, as though they were good in themselves. "Be ye perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," who lives and administers by a disinterested kindness, which is the pattern that men are to follow.

There are many who think that being pious signifies a cold scrupulosity—an exact circumspection. And this idea is united to another idea, of self-culture. That men shall keep themselves unspotted from the world; that they shall be radiant all the time, growing brighter and brighter; and that they shall build themselves up in a certain symmetrical and stately strength and excellence—that they think is piety. It may be one of the things which will make piety stronger; it may give a man a greater power in using himself, as undoubtedly it does; but that which makes a man Christlike is not the fact that he is doing so much for himself, that he is building himself up in various right things, and ridding himself of various wrong things: it is that he is perfect, *as* his Father in heaven is, who makes His sun to shine on the good and on the bad, and who sends His rain on the just and on the unjust. Disinterested love, disinterested goodness—that is the pattern.

There are others whose idea of piety is largely shaped by the esthetic feeling. Nothing seems to them to be good that is not symmetrical. Nothing seems to be good to them that is not harmonious. Taste, rather than benevolence is their divinity; and every fault disgusts them. They are apt to be full of class-selfishness. They are apt to separate themselves from men. They are apt to have the Pharisaism of the pew, and to be satisfied only with walking in the midst of things that are well-ordered and beautiful. I love beauty and regularity, too, where they are under the guidance and inspiration of a disinterested benevolence; but where they are substitutes for it, I abhor them. I would as soon undertake to raise my harvest by the pale moonbeams instead of the glory and fervor of the sun, as to undertake to raise anything like character, or give it anything like power in the world, by the esthetic principle. As an adjuvant, as a collateral, wielded by the hand of power, it is good; but of itself it is not piety—though many make it to be. Benevolence is the center of true Christian character. Christian character is an automatic state of benevolence. It is a state of benevolence so full that it overflows, not upon consideration and measure, but as a lamp sheds its light abroad.

Do you suppose a candle, standing in the window, says, "I will look down the road, and if I see a miserable, lone fellow traveling, I will not shine upon him"? No, it says, "I will treat all alike." The first that comes over the hill is father Good-heart; and the candle shines along the road and lights him on his way. And how little that candle wastes its light! It is a guide to this wayfaring man. And it does not say, "It is for me to be just," but shines without regard to any such question as that. Next comes a hard, stingy man, who is traveling ten miles at a shilling's expense to collect a sixpence from some poor widow. And the candle says, "Yes, that is the road That is the way. Travel on." Next comes a poor orphan boy, crying because he is afraid that he shall be belated at night; and the candle shines for him, to cheer him on his way. Next comes a robust shepherd boy, whistling with joy; and the candle shines for him. And everybody who walks that road gets the guidance of that candle without discrimination. They are all human beings needing guidance. Not one of them deserves it; the best of them have forfeited their right to it; but the candle shines for them all. And so the sun sends its light abroad over the world.

This is to be the supreme ideal of a true manhood in Christ Jesus. A man that is intellectually perfect, and therefore doctrinally correct, and stands forever turning the wheel of some ecclesiastical machine, grinding out dogmas and propositions and prin-

ciples and truths for mankind, is not ministering to the spiritual wants of the race. Men do not feed on such shadows as these. He has Christ who is perfect as his Father in heaven is perfect. Benevolence is the genius of perfection.

Oh! how far are the surly-browed and wrinkled-foreheaded men that with fierce zeal and intense determination push the right although it goes like a sword, from being God-men, after the pattern of Christ Jesus!

2. There is a relation that this idea sustains to the popular notions of justice which require a consideration. There are many who are confounded on this subject. They have a notion about justice that I think will never be found outside of the bounds of this world, as it is mechanical and physical. As justice has been administered—and it has been administered in very imperfect ways—it has generally followed a simple line of action proceeding upon intellectual perceptions, in setting apart men, right and left, as good and bad. Justice to the good requires that they have prosperity; and justice to the bad requires that they be unprosperous. This has been the line of demarcation. This treating men according to their deserts has been the supreme idea of justice. It has acted upon the plan of giving to good men what they deserve, and of giving to bad men what they deserve.

Now, I aver that there is no possibility of justice according to this idea. You do not know what a good man deserves, if he deserves anything. You cannot measure it. You do not know what a bad man deserves. You cannot measure it. You would not have me treat that man other than strictly according to his deserts? But can you tell whether there is in that man's state anything that he has inherited? Can you tell what ancestral strains have come down into that man's nature? Can you tell what infelicities there have been in that man's education, which gave him warp and bias? Can you tell me what experience has struck into his being and stained him through and through? Can you tell what are the trials of that man's heart? Can you tell how hard it is for him to overcome the passions and appetites and circumstances that tempt him to be bad? Can you tell what is the secret spring of his action? How little do you know of his motive, and of the operation of that motive! And yet, you talk of giving to that man according to his deserts. You have not the first element of judgment in his case. You know nothing about it.

You remember how Christ Jesus, in contrasting the Pharisees who seemed to be first-rate people, were men well-to-do in the world, and were overgrown from excessive indulgence in the luxu-

ries of life, but who were exemplary, and about as deserving as anybody in the community—you remember how Christ in contrasting them with persons in the street, that were steeped in vice and crime, and that seemed ready to dissolve like ichor into the abyss of hell, and deserved nothing but reproach and condemnation, apparently, said,

"The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."

How little can we administer justice in one case or another! How far are the thoughts of God from our thoughts!

"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

On the other hand, if justice be kindness suitably administered, then there can be very little doubt as to the reality of justice, and very little doubt as to its benefit. What is justice but the administration of kindness in the way that shall suit each man's necessity, and his necessity in his social liabilities and relationships? That which is drawing every man with love, and which is drawing him with that which love inspires, and which every man needs in himself and in the relations which he sustains to his fellow-men—that is justice. The administration of benevolence is justice. It is the tendency to do good to a man, first from a consideration of what he is, and second from a consideration of the relationship in which he stands.

Although, oftentimes, justice may take on a pain-giving form, it is not on that account a malign feeling. It is necessary, not unfrequently to give pain to one that you love.

I remember very well, when I used to come in from my sports, soiled and smouched (for I did not spare myself), and was to be brought into decent society, and it was necessary for the sisterly hand to rub the dirt from my face, I never liked it. And I know that when my hair, that went with the winds, and played with every one of them, had to be smoothed out, I never liked the passage of the comb through it—although they were seeking beauty. (I hope they found it!) It was done with the utmost kindness. It was done from the best feeling, by the nurse, or the sister, or the mother; but to me it was vexation and torment—in a small way. I never liked it. When I had committed any offense against brother or sister, and it became necessary for me to have my moral sense awakened in order that I might see that I had violated the law of kindness, and feel those mysterious tinglings, which were eye-openers, that I might see the way of love which I had missed, and come back into it, these things were not pleasant to me.

"No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness."

And all the way through the household there is this infliction of

pain. There is nothing in this world that inflicts so much pain, and saves so much, as love. It is the judicious administration of restraint, it is the judicious administration of pungency, it is the judicious administration of enforced duty and instruction, that educates the child.

The great-bosomed mother, the great radiant face of a love watching that pain shall not go a bit too far, but still pressing it, and still insisting upon it, says, "My dear child, I will not suffer you to grow up so. I cannot live and see you become bad. My darling, you *shall not* be bad. By all the love that is in me, and by all the hope that is in me, and by all the prophecy of a mother's heart, you shall not be bad. I will cry with you, but cry you shall! It is necessary to make you sweeter and better and nobler." Is not that justice?

There is another way of estimating justice. "Who is this? Fetch him up. He has been here half a dozen times before. Drunk again, eh? Here, officer, give him four months. Public purity must be preserved. It is time for us to go to dinner. Send the others up three months apiece. Never mind, I will hear those cases after dinner." That is justice, is it? Men say, "We must keep up the dignity of the law; we must see that authority is not trodden under foot; we must maintain morality in the community." I say that it is hideous injustice. I say that selfishness and indifference to human character and suffering are infernal. And nothing can change the nature of things. He that does not care in his heart, though he does the right thing, is unjust. Where a judge commits a criminal; where he strikes the law down upon the wrongdoer, and says, "He ought to have it, and I am glad that he has got it," it is infernal. It is not justice, even though the man may merit stripes, and though it may be best that he should have them. There is not, in God's universe, any man that has a right to put his hand upon another man except it be the hand of love. He that has no love has no right to touch anybody.

God, himself, in the infinite expansive government of the universe, sits regent, as the God of love, saying, "Be perfect as I am. And I tell all mankind what I am by making my sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and by sending my rain upon the just and upon the unjust. Be ye perfect in that way."

If this be the true notion of justice—the notion of love educating men, of love using whatever is needful for men's education, of love seeking to administer for men for their good, in all their relations; that is, with a wise regard to all their necessities which spring out of their social connections in society—if this be the true notion of justice, ought it not to revolutionize the literature, and amend the thought and procedure of almost all mankind?

Now, justice is vengeful. Now, justice springs from blood. Now, justice helps that which is animal in man. Now, justice is the unpurged, uncleansed, unripened, blind impulse of the beast that is yet in mankind. But justice in God is the efflux and the power and the wisdom and the goodness of love, shaping men out of poverty, and out of imperfection, and out of sin; molding them; and bringing them out into the bright and glorious image of the God of love. And every man under the divine administration has a right to that justice. He has a right to as much kindness and to as much goodness as he can profit by consistently with all the relations which he sustains to the mass of society.

The application of this thought, which is made by our Saviour himself, is one that ought to be made by us a thousand times where we make it once—its application, I mean, to the forgiveness of men. What is the ground of forgiveness? It does not lie in the recipient at all. It lies in the giver. We forgive simply because it is the nature of goodness to do it. Kindness, love—this does not take any offense. It has nothing to avenge. It is a spontaneous outflow of generous feeling. Love seeks to remedy evils. When it sees a fault or a mistake or a sin, it seeks to efface it. God forgives men. Why? Because he loves to do it. He does it *for his own sake.* Misinterpreting that expression, old theologians supposed that God forgave men for his own sake just as a king put a crown on his head for his own sake. They gave it a monarchical significance. But I believe that God forgives for his own sake in a psychological sense. A generous man gives away handful after handful of money, why? Because the act bounds back with pleasure to him inwardly. Forgiveness is the instinctive action of a true generosity in a man. Why do some men speak with figures of beauty? Because it is their duty to do it? No; but because they cannot help themselves. They see visions in the air, and they paint pictures unconsciously. In their nature they do it because their nature tends to act in that way. Why does God forgive? Because it is his nature to forgive. And he forgives perpetually. He loves to forgive.

Well, do you mean to tell me that all stand on an equal footing? No, but the condition does not lie in desert. Nobody is benefited by being forgiven unless he takes the bounty. The mere act of kind feeling does not do anybody any good.

After many wanderings I come back to the place of my birth. I have lost all trace of my friends. My father and mother were living when I left home and became a sailor boy; but I have lost communication with them. They have moved out of the city. As near as I can learn, they are in such a near country town. And, foot-bare, I

set out and go there. It is twilight when I reach the town. And weary and worn I sit down on the steps of a little dwelling. I cannot help shedding tears, I am so miserable. I say to myself, "I have come back home, and I cannot find that anybody who knows me lives; and I have no place to go. I have no father and no mother." And I lean my head upon my hand, and against the door, and cannot sleep for my thoughts. Quite unknown to me or them I have sat down right where my father and mother live. They are sitting by the hearth. The mother, knitting, and looking into the fire, sees strange ships, and on every one of them is her sailor boy. And she says, "Oh, that he would come home!" And the father, drawing out his handkerchief, wipes tears from his eyes. They look at each other; and each knows what the other is thinking of; but they do not speak. The thoughts and affections of those old people center about me. They would give all they have in the world if they knew my whereabouts. And there I sit on their doorstep. They fain would minister to my wants; but the bounty of love which they would bestow upon me is inside, and does not get outside, I do not press in to get it, and so I do not have it.

Now, suppose a man, going on in a sinful course, wants to be forgiven? God offers forgiveness to him; but it may be that it does not reach him. God does not force forgiveness upon men. It requires, in order to be effectual, to be accepted. Unless it be a fact, a reality, to a man, it can do him no good. And so, though God pours abroad heart-love for all men, all men do not enjoy its blessings. The sunlight does not guide blind folks; and love does not smile upon men, though it be never so bountiful, if they do not open their eyes to behold it; but the moment they do open their eyes, and see it, they feel its inspiring power. And for a man to pray for forgiveness whose heart is in a condition to receive forgiveness, is like a man's praying for rain in an equinoctial storm. The whole heaven is full of it, and the whole earth and atmosphere are saturated with it. Take it. It never will be anything to you till you do take it. Melt it into your consciousness. Coin it into your own experience. Then it will bring forth rich and blessed results. The trouble is that you do not take forgiveness. Forgiveness is not prepared for you and for the occasion: it pours forth its bounty ceaselessly and endlessly. And shall father, shall mother, shall lover never forget to love, and their love never forget to be gracious, and shall God, who is so much greater, and so much grander, and so much better, sit with unextinguished hate and revenge? Shall he not love on and forever, who symbolizes himself by the ever-shining sun, which pours its bounty on the good and the bad, and who sends his rain on the just and the unjust alike?

You will be very apt to like this side of the subject—the forgiveness of God to you; but now, on the other side, do you forgive in that way? I have noticed one thing—that men are always willing to forgive after an offense has been acknowledged, and the effect of it has been done away, and they have been suitably worshiped, and patted, and "set up." When they have subdued the person, and got an advantage over him, then they are willing to forgive him. That is a domineering and most hateful despotism, instead of forgiveness. It is as far removed as possible from divine forgiveness. Love forgives without conditions. Love forgives once for all. Love forgives without regard to any after consideration. Love covers down the offense which it has forgiven.

God's love does to the sinner what a mother's love does to a fractious child. The child disobeys her, and gives her pain, for days, and weeks, and months, and years; and yet she forgives it. Do you forgive men thus?

You say men who have committed an offense against you do not deserve forgiveness. But the question of forgiveness is not one of desert. The question of forgiveness is a question of your resemblance to God. It is a question of your being filled with this divine beneficence. It is a question of your having regard for the well-being of others, and yearning to do them good, and being willing, not only to give them amnesty, but, as it were, to give them your own self.

"Do you mean to say, then, that the moment a man has done you a wrong you are to fly to his neck?" Oh, no, not necessarily. It may be that the manifestation of this feeling would be the worst thing for the person. It may be that the spirit of love will inspire you to take a course of discipline. But that which actuates you must not be the hardness of conscience. It certainly must not be combativeness, with the monkey-cap of conscience on it. It must not be hatred. It must not be revenge. It must not be selfishness making believe that it is conscience. Nobody has a right to chastise till he is in a forgiving frame of mind; till he is conscious that his heart is full and surcharged with that same love which made Christ die for sinners while yet they were his enemies.

"Oh, but," say men (how scriptural men become when it is the malign passions that want to justify themselves!) "how is it in Luke xviith, 4th?" Let us see how it is.

"And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him."

People say, "As soon as I see evidence of repentance, I am willing to forgive." But is repentance here declared to be a condition of forgiveness? Not at all. There is no idea conveyed, that you shall

not forgive a man until he repents. The Saviour is supposing the case of a man who comes to you to be forgiven of an offense. The man says, "I have offended against you, and I beg to be forgiven." Your clerk comes to you and says, "I promise never to drink again; but last night I was overcome by wine. I am sorry for it. Will you bear with me?" "Yes," you say, "I will bear with you." And you do not say it because the man says that he is sorry, though the man does say so. In the course of a month or two he is overcome again, and he comes back and implores your forgiveness, saying, "I have the same sad story to tell, and I am ashamed to tell it. I am heartily sorry for it. Last night I was carried away by my associates, and led to drink again. Are you willing to bear with me?" You are willing; and your big-heartedness is such that you forgive him, not simply because he said, "I am sorry," not because of any good thing that is in him; but out of regard to his welfare. Repentance was never made by our Master a condition of forgiveness. On the other hand, in Matthew xviiith, 21st, it is, without any qualification, taught that men ought to be forgiven as often as they offend.

"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?"

Here no condition is stated.

"Jesus said unto him I say not unto you, Until seven times; but, until seventy times seven."

Now that is language to which it is utterly impossible to apply any condition. It is definite language. It means: Forever forgive. Live in a state of mind in which forgiveness will come spontaneously. Never will a man come to you in such a state that you ought not to be in a forgiving mood toward him.

But there is this to be said: that in a spirit of true love a course of discipline pursued with the person forgiven is oftentimes good for that person. You must impose some limitation that shall be wholesome. You may say to your child, "I shall not show you kindness till you have gone and asked forgiveness of your brother whom you spit upon. I love you dearly. I love you too well to let you go unpunished. I cannot take such a naughty child into my lap. You shall not sit with me, and you shall not sit at the table, and you shall not go with your young companions, until you have brought yourself into a right state of mind. I am in a right state of mind, and you must be, too."

A man stands by a piano, with one hand on the key and the other on the chord, and as he tightens the chord it cries, "Don't, don't, don't, don't," until, at last, it is tuned; and no harm is done to the instrument, either.

So God does to us; and so we do to others. It is a musical ear

seeking harmony—not a hard hand seeking regularity. So we deal with our children. We do not shield them from the effects of their wrong-doing. But there must be discrimination in this regard. There must not be a systematic laying down of conditions. You say, "A man that has done wrong must take steps to renounce that wrong. Let him show me that he is sorry, and then I will turn around and take steps to forgive him." Not a bit of it. That is not the idea at all. You are to be Father Greatheart. You are to be the soul of bounty. You are to love that man so much that you can be patient with him. Yea, more, you are to love him so that you can make him suffer for the sake of making him better. But it must be unmistakable love, full of sweetness and graciousness and gentleness, so that the sufferer himself shall say, "It is love dealing with me for my good." There is to be no acerbity in forgiveness; there is to be no sternness in it; there is to be no cruelty in it. There is to be in forgiveness nothing but the deepest love, plenary, ample, infinite, as it is administered in the hands of God forever and forever. And all subterfuges of hatred and wounded pride must be exposed.

There are thousands of persons lurking in the devil's den who would have you believe that they are spotless as lambs. They are not. They are wolves'cubs. They snap with their teeth, and rend with their claws. And yet, they claim to be acting under the influence of the spirit of forgiveness. They "stand on right and truth, and do not forgive until men are prepared by repentance to be forgiven."

4. In organizing the household, and in organizing society, is it not time that we should attempt to carry out to their full force the instruments of love and benevolence, in governing and developing men, and in promoting the well-being of society. We have tried other things, one after another. We have had eras, we have had epochs, of various kinds. And so far as love has been tried, it has been found to be the most universal educator and cultivator of peace.

There is one place where love is more nearly supreme than anywhere else; and that is where success has been achieved more nearly than anywhere else. I refer to the household. There the fountain of love is never sealed. There love is more nearly on the pattern of love in heaven than anywhere else. That is the bright spot of human history. While nations have gone on, voluminous, vast, dark, with desolation on every hand, groaning and travailing in pain until now; while there have been outward conflicts innumerable; while the world has been full of confusion and crying and misery, there have been in all lands houses with families secluded in them. And that which the State lacked, and business lacked, and

all men outside of the household lacked, the household has possessed. Equity, justice, forgiveness, has flourished in the household.

And is it not high time to break away from the popular notion in regard to justice and forgiveness, and substitute the divine idea for it?

At present I should not abolish the ruder forms of government, and attempt to govern simply on the principle of benevolence, because men are not disciplined to it. The government which we have is better than nothing. The rude forces of law are better than nothing. You cannot do away with them except by putting in their place something higher and nobler. But the ideal which we are to strive toward, and which the school should inculcate, and which the press should urge, is a government after the pattern of the divine government. It is time for us to be done working by the selfish and malign feelings. We have worked long enough by the basilar faculties. It is time for the pulpit, and the paper, and the school, as well as the household, to begin to work by the law, irrepressible, of love.

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

And how is that? Let me read again the passage with the context:

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for *He* maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We thank thee, O God! for thy pity. How helpless are we, striving against the mighty forces that are at work around about us, ignorant, inconstant, and often overborne! How often in our outward and bodily life do we need the suggestions of thy wisdom and the government of thy care and kindness! For all thy mercies through providence we thank thee. And we rejoice that thou knowest what things we have need of before we ask thee, and that thou art preparing and wilt prepare, even when thou dost it through ourselves, working in us to will and to do the things that are right. We rejoice that thou hast also the knowledge of that which is within, and that all our hearts' necessities are open before thee, and that thou dost not sit severely judging. We rejoice that, knowing what is right and what is wrong to us, thou art not sitting stern and ascerb and unrelenting, sharply demanding exact rectitude of all thy creatures. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. Thou dost behold what might, what power, in many is working the things that are for the flesh; and thou seest how they that strive against the flesh, often strive in discouragement and defeat, frequently cast down, though not destroyed. And thou dost have compassion upon their infirmities. Yea, and thou dost have compassion upon their sins. Thou dost not wait to be gracious until they have discharged their souls of all iniquity, faithful in word and life. Thou art beforehand with kindness, and with mercy, and with gentleness, and with goodness. And it is thy gentleness, it is thy sparing mercy, it is thy long-suffering kindness, it is thine infinite patience with us that saves us. And thou art ministering, in this strife within, to that which is good. Thou art teaching us to overcome that which is bad.

We thank thee that thou hast pity upon the struggles of our souls; and that all our dim discernings of things higher and better, which come to tantalize us and then to torment us, and that all the yearnings which we have, are the Spirit striving in us, and with us, with groanings that cannot be uttered.

And so, though we cannot see thee face to face, though we know only in part, and look out upon the brilliant obscure of the other life, thou art there, and art drawing us up toward thee. How little the drops that go up by the draught of the sun know that they shall shine in the rainbow, and glow in the cloud! So thou art drawing us upward, we know not where, except that it shall be to joy and purity and dignity and glory. We do not understand these things yet, nor their meanings; but we have faith to believe that thou art sitting in an eternal Fatherhood of love, and that thy heart is full of power, and that all wisdom comes forth from it. Thou art drawing all things kindly, gently, upward to the land of blessedness; and thou wilt overcome, as with an everlasting victory, all opposition; and thou wilt banish all things from heaven that make offense and destroy with transgression. Thou wilt utterly purify the universe. Yet the day shall come when thou wilt have all things put beneath thy power. And we rejoice, though the fullness of the meaning cannot be apprehended, that we understand enough to fill us with hope and cheer. We shall be there; we shall see thee; we shall be like thee; we shall understand even as now we are understood. All uncertainty will have passed away. We shall begin the better career, having left behind tormenting passions—the body and all its infirmities and ailments; and we shall be as the angels of God. In the hope of this blessed consummation we live, and will unto the end.

Now, draw near to every one in whom thou hast implanted these desires;

to every one that hungers and thirsts for righteousness, to teach them which is the Gate Beautiful. Teach them by it to enter the temple of God. And having entered, may they abide there. Teach thou thine own to come by the way of love, in which is all light, and all strength, and all hope, and all truth, and all rectitude, and all that is divine.

And we pray that thou wilt interpret thyself more and more to thy people in the royalty of thy real and innermost life. We pray for the coming of that kingdom in which love shall be supreme. Let thy will be done upon earth as it is in heaven. We pray for the day when more and more shall seek Christ, subduing their pride, their selfishness, and their waywardness, and becoming gentle, and long-suffering, and patient, and full of disinterested kindness, as thou art. We pray that thou wilt grant that those who are thine may grow not so much in the fervor and visions and raptures of an imaginative experience, as in the reality of self-distrust and self-denial, and of doing good, and of being good that they may do good.

And we pray that thou wilt increase the power of the church by increasing the power of the faith that works by love in all its members.

We pray that thou wilt spread abroad this Gospel of purity and of rectitude, by the power of divine love in their example. Grant that if there be any seeking to live a new and better life, they may not hesitate to lay aside their sins. May they have the inspiration and power which comes from the higher life in Christ Jesus. May they learn in him what is disinterested kindness and love. And may they seek this love with all their heart and mind and soul and strength, toward God and toward man. May it be the feeling of their nature.

And we pray that thou wilt grant patience to those that are discouraged, or those that seek under great difficulties to fulfill the law of God in themselves. Even if they suffer, may they still persevere, knowing that when they have suffered awhile God will rescue them, or that he will give them grace to bear. if he take not the thorn from their side.

We pray that thou wilt bless all thy erring children wherever they are. Grant that they may be conscious that the treasure that waits for them is greater than the treasure which they seek. How much better is the house above than the houses which we build below! How much better are the friendships that bloom in immortality than those whose seeds we plant in this chilly soil of life! How much better is the glorious companionship and noble society of the blessed in heaven than that which we seek among men! Grant that we may have imperishable riches. Grant that we may have friendships that never grow dim. Grant that we may have aspirations and ambitions that shall never die, but that shall have more realization beyond the grave than they can have here.

We pray, O Lord! that thou wilt grant that this day divine truth may be ministered in us by these holy thoughts and ardent yearnings. Grant that we may this day feel ourselves drawn up toward thee. How all things are looking up to-day toward the sun, for light and for warmth! How all the fields yearn! How all the sleeping tribes, that have lain long covered down by winter, begin to solicit, and are drawn unsolicited by the bright shining of the sun! For the Spring hath come, and warmth revives, and the singing of the birds is heard again. So, O Sun of righteousness! come to our winter. So come to all our dormant thoughts and feelings in us, that they shall spring up with new growth. Make our heart the garden of the Lord. Walk thou in it. And may we meet thee unabashed and unashamed.

We pray that this thy church, and all thy churches, may rejoice to-day. May thy servants be able to preach with heart, and with soul, and with hope of success. Wherever they are in the circumstances of discouragement, wherever they sow much and reap little, may they still have the con-

scious presence of God, and may their faith not fail, and may they have a longer life in view than that which lies between these horizons. May they live and labor as those that expect to see another and glorious life beyond, when resurrection shall have found them, and brought them into the presence of God. And so may they endure trials and burdens, not fainting by the way, and knowing that they will reap in due season if they faint not.

We pray for feeble churches, wherever they are, throughout the length and breadth of our land. May scattered flocks be gathered together and may shepherds be found to lead them by the side of still waters.

And may intelligence prevail. May schools, and colleges, and academies, and universities, and all seminaries of learning, sacred and divine, have thy presence and guidance, that the young that are passing through them, may be sanctified, and grow up to be godly men.

And we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the nations of the earth. We thank thee for coming peace. We pray that all the ravages of war may be repaired. We pray that those that sigh, and that are bereaved, and that sit in darkness, may find consolation and comforters. May the day come when justice shall prevail; when there shall be no war; when this mighty medicine of God shall no longer be given to the nations that are sick so that they must needs drink blood. We pray thee. O Lord! that the final glory may come—the new heaven and the new earth in which dwell righteousness. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Wilt thou follow with thy blessing, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, the word of truth and of exhortation which has been spoken. Fill our hearts with supreme beneficence. May it grow in us. And as from the ripening tree fall, even in the silence of the summer night, the fruits that are waiting for the comer, so from our unconscious thought and our unconscious feeling, may there drop down perpetually blossom and fruit of all goodness and love. Grant, we pray thee, that we may seek more and more the mind and will that are in Christ. And, may that Spirit which is in the Father, and which brought him from the throne to the bottom of human life, and which led him to love the unlovely, and to die for his enemies, and to return to his glory above, and live for the good of men—grant that it may be in us. And may we remember that if a man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his. And finally may we be brought where we shall need no more exhortation, and shall be like thee, and shall shine in the luminousness of an endless life. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

THE LIBERTY OF THE GOSPEL.

I propose to comment upon the history contained in the 21st chapter of the Book of Acts, beginning with the 15th, and ending with the 26th verse.

"And after those days we took up our carriages, and went to Jerusalem. There went with us also certain other disciples of Cæsarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge. And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the day following Paul went with us unto James; and all the elders were present. And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry."

I can scarcely understand why the salutation should have been mentioned, unless Paul's habit was that of an especially perfect gentleman. He went to Jerusalem, and was received into a company of prominent Christians; and there must have been something very affectionate in the mode of salutation which he bestowed on them, or he could hardly have made such an impression as is indicated by the record.

"*When he had saluted them*, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry."

This was a conference-meeting at which one might well have desired to be present. Even for the least disciple who has been active in any good word or work, there is always a willing ear and a ready heart. But to have heard Paul—a man of such universal nature in spiritual directions; a man who had traversed every region, almost, of the then civilized world; a man who had a breadth of experience such as, perhaps, can never fall to the lot of any other man—to have heard him give some account of his own personal history, was a privilege devoutly to be wished for.

I remember very well to have heard Mr. Nettleton, when he used to return from his tours of revival labors to the old house of my father in Litchfield, recount the scenes of the revivals which he had gone through in Danbury, or Woodbury, or wherever he had been working; and certainly, even to me, a little child, they were golden hours; and to my father and to him they were hours of triumph beyond the ordinary experiences of men in the flesh. But what were these as compared with the hours spent in an assembly

SUNDAY MORNING, Mar. 19, 1871. LESSON: ACTS XV. 1-33. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 40, 688, 1262.

where James, the brother of our Lord, presided, and where members of the Christian church of Jerusalem listened to the Apostle Paul recounting what he had seen, and heard, and thought, and felt, and done, all over the Roman empire!

"And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all jealous of the law, [the law of Moses]."

The transition seems a little singular here. After Paul had told of his revival labors, they broke out into a triumphant strain, and glorified God; and then they said unto him,

"Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all jealous of the law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs."

Though they were in a rapturous feeling of divine love, they were yet most tender-hearted in respect to the Mosaic law in Jerusalem. And they went on to say,

"What is it, therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come."

So, then, you see that Paul had his orthodoxy suspected in Jerusalem. Would it not seem strange to you to hear that John Knox was suspected of being heretical in Edinburgh? or that Jonathan Edwards was suspected of being unsound in Northampton? or that John Calvin was suspected of being lenient and lax in Geneva? And does it not seem strange that St. Paul, in Jerusalem, was not regarded as having got up to the highest mark as a religious man? So it was. It was not openly charged that he was not orthodox. There were rumors to that effect, but no charges—none whatever. The case was probably this: that when Paul's name was mentioned among the assemblies of Christians in Jerusalem, they used to say, "Yes, a very zealous man; but I am *afraid*." "What are you afraid of?" "Well, I should not like to say. I would rather not talk about these things, for I hope it will all turn out right." At other times his name would be mentioned in connection with some transcendent work; and they would say, "O, yes, Paul is a successful worker. He has the art of stirring up communities. He is very influential. But then——well, I *hope* it will all turn out right!" And so, after twenty years of earnest, faithful labor in almost all the civilized world, Paul came to Jerusalem to find that he was not "orthodox" according to the views of Christians there. He found that they held him in doubt. And this is all the more extraordinary considering that these men were most of them Christians.

The elders, by the voice of James, the brother of our Lord, who

presided—the oldest man, and doubtless the natural leader of the brethren there—said to Paul,

"Do, therefore, this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them [according to the Mosaic system]; them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads; and all may know that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law."

That was as much as to say, "Your orthodoxy is suspected. Now, do you go in and subscribe to the entire Confession of Faith, and accept it whole, in the midst of all the people; and then they will say that you are orthodox and sound." Says this council in Jerusalem to the apostle Paul, the most successful and zealous man that ever labored in the Christian ministry, "Go into the temple as though you had never heard of Christ, and make yourself a thorough Jew in their sight. Here are four men, Nazarites: you go with them and pay their charges"—or pay charges with them. Some think that they were poor and could not pay their own charges and so absolve themselves from their vow, and that Paul was to pay their charges for them: others think that he was simply to stand with them, and be recognized with them as under a vow. When a Nazarite made a vow, it required his abstenation from intoxicating drinks. It forbade him to cut his hair. It forbade him to touch anything, under any circumstances, that had died. A Nazarite vow, at the time of our Saviour and during the times of the apostles, could not last less than thirty days. It might last longer.

And so here were these men; and the Apostle Paul was to join them, and to present himself with them with three offerings— a he-lamb, for a sin-offering; a ewe-lamb, for a burnt-offering; and a ram, for a thank-offering.

This was what was recommended him to do: To go into the temple, as though all his prejudices were orthodox, and so place himself on a footing with his countrymen, and to do it on purpose to produce the impression on his fellow-Christians of the Jewish nation, that he, like them, had not abandoned Moses, but that he was "orderly"—that is, that he was in the very way of his fathers.

They said to him:

"As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication."

That is, Jews must go after the manner of the Jews; but with a few exceptions, for special reasons, Gentiles are not to be burdened with Jewish ceremonials. They may go after the manner of the Gentiles. That was the declaration of the council.

"Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

This history of the primitive church in Jerusalem is one of the most extraordinary, I think, in the New Testament, when all its hidden significance is brought out.

1. It strikes us as very strange indeed, that Paul himself should not have sufficiently vindicated his adhesion to the national faith, and that he should have been laid under suspicion. It does not follow, however, that all men who are suspected are like Paul. It does not follow that a man may not be justly suspected. But it does show that when, in any nation, or at any period, a man undertakes to develop a higher obligation out of a lower one, a religious life out of a dead form, a vital spirit from a dogma, or the full truth from its seed, he renders himself liable to misapprehension, as one that is abandoning the faith. That which people love to hear, is what they have been accustomed to hear—only they like to hear it in an original form. They like to see the same truths, but they like to see them dressed differently. The ideas that men have been educated in; the views that men have held from time immemorial, become, in some sense, parts of their selfness. They identify themselves with those views. And when men preach them again, with vivacity, and with glowing illustration, and with power, it is a kind of subtle compliment to their believing them already. Men like old things in new clothes. And in Paul's time they liked to hear the Apostles preach just what they had always believed, only making it more plain. Self-love says, "We knew that we were right; and now we see how gloriously right we have been."

When one undertakes to develop out of an imperfect morality a higher morality, just in proportion as he goes from leaf to blossom, or from blossom to cluster, he renders himself liable to be apprehended for having abandoned the faith. The Christian Jews had accepted Christ. They had believed in him. They had adhered to him by the power of faith. And yet they could not bear to break away from the temple, nor from the routine regularity of the Mosaic law. So, when they heard that Paul had no objection to circumcision, but did not care for circumcision; that he had no objection to sacrifice, but that he did not consider sacrifice as necessary, they said, "This Paul is an invader of settled opinions; this Paul is a dangerous man. He may be right; but you cannot tell where all this will end. Probably he will go to Hellenic views, and become a teacher of false philosophies"—and that, because he held the whole economy of Moses in a higher sense, and with a nobler purpose, than they did who suspected him!

The question should be always this, in regard to new views or ideas that are presented: Do the new doctrines tend to loosen moral obligation? Do they tend to give larger liberty to the under man than to the upper man? Do they tend to produce spirituality, or its lack? Are they lowering the moral standard, or are they raising it? For, whatever brings new motives to the higher spiritual life; whatever tends to carry men up toward faith, and love, and disinterested activity, cannot be far wrong.

2. This scene reveals the fact that some thirty years after Christ's death (some chronologists say twenty-eight, and some thirty), the Christians of Jerusalem were in full communion with the Jewish temple. After our Saviour had been gone from the earth from twenty-eight to thirty years, the whole assembly of Christians, with James, the brother of our Lord, at their head, the whole central, mother Church, in Jerusalem, were in full communion with the temple. We have the most explicit testimony of this.

"When they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all jealous of the law."

They all yet believed in Moses. They all believed in the ceremonies and ways of the temple. Well, what of that? A good deal of that, if you will only consider its meaning.

Where, then, is the claim that Jesus delivered to his apostles, or that he in any wise shaped out, a Christian Church, or a Christian polity? Here, thirty years after Christ's ascension, but a few steps from the very place where he offered himself as a sacrifice, was the Mother Church still making offerings and sacrifices in the old Jewish temple! Nay, so tenacious were they that the temple-worship should be observed, that, by the authority of James, the brother of our Lord, and by the consent of the whole Church, the chief apostle of the New Dispensation was made ostentatiously to go through a portion of the distinctively Mosaic ceremonial, in order to approve himself to the Church in Jerusalem. And yet, how many ten thousand times, in ten thousand books, has it been said that our Lord told the apostles just how the Church was to be fixed; just how its frame was to be laid down; just what were to be its ordinances and policy and worship, while here we find that thirty years afterward those very men yet served God in the temple!

Where, then, is your prescribed polity? Where are your priestly orders, your authoritatively ordained ceremonies? Where is your exact, systematic worship? Where are your High and Low schools? The fact cannot be gainsaid that the Christians in Jerusalem had no idea of a church organization thirty years after Christ's ascension.

The inference is irresistible. Why, do you suppose that if our Lord had said to the disciples, or to the apostles, "Such is to be the pattern of Church service," they would have forgotten it so soon? Had he ordained any system of worship, and told his followers that that was the pattern of his future Church, would they not have remembered it, and acted accordingly? And yet, there was nothing which indicated that they had received any such instructions from the Master.

You cannot find one word that was uttered by Christ which can be construed into an indication of an outward form for his Church. Nor can you find in the primitive teachings of the apostles themselves the claim that there was any form whatever prescribed for the Church. And all that which has passed into the faith of modern times in respect to the external form of the Church, is absolutely of human invention. It is none the worse for that; but the divine and binding authority of the external forms, and ordinances, and ceremonies connected with church life, is gone, if it is pretended that such authority is derived mainly from the apostles, or still higher, from Christ. For they gave no such authority.

The Christian scheme was not a philosophy. It was not a capitulary of great truths. It was still less an organization. The Christian scheme was something far transcending a philosophy. It was something far nobler than an organization. It was an inspiration. It was a divine afflatus. It was a power introduced into the world by which the best impulses of men should be led up toward ideal life. The central peculiarity of Christianity was this: It prescribed a life transcending all ordinary attainments, and then brought a moral pressure to bear upon men, to carry them up to that life. It neither taught, nor was designed to teach, a philosophy. It said neither, "These things are true," nor, "These things are not true." It left men to find out for themselves whether they were true or not. And from the time of Christ to our day, Christian theology has been growing according to the analogy of any other system. It has had to pass through precisely the same experience that any other form of philosophy passes through. And church organizations were not ordained to be just so, and just so many. They have gone on increasing until the number of them is very large; and we shall still have more of them. But it is not of these that I designed to speak. I will now merely speak of the Church in the sense of its having one external form.

In our Master's teachings, and in the teachings of the apostles and disciples, there is no hint that there was to be a single outward organization after a given pattern. The disciples were to assemble,

they were to organize, they were to worship,—but, the spirit being right the method in all cases was to be determined by experience. And if there was to be a different external form of organization, the Church at Jerusalem, the mother Church of all, did not know it, and was still in the temple, and did not hesitate to make Paul go there, and offer up sacrifices, thirty years after the death of Christ. Thirty years before, one great Sacrifice for all had been offered up. Thirty years before, the outward altar had been really smitten; but it had not yet been set aside. And they had not found it out, and were attempting to carry on both the inward spirit of Christ and the external economy of the Jews.

3. It is also shown, here, that the apostles put the Jews and the Gentiles upon a different footing in regard to ethical duties; that the things which were binding on the Jews were not binding on the Gentiles; and *vice versa*. In other words, the apostles did not set out with one definite economy for all nations. Holiness of life was to be universal. But all externals of worship and government were to vary with the circumstances of differing nations. When among one class, early Christians insisted upon the law of Moses—circumcision and sacrifices; and when they were among another class, they waived these things. They said to the Gentiles outside of Jerusalem, "This yoke is not to be laid on you. You are not to be circumcised nor to offer sacrifices." But in Jerusalem men were not to evade the service of the Temple. And how is this consistent with one uniform administration—one uniform ritual—one system of universal ordinances?

They said to Paul, "You being a Jew, go and perform the duties of a Jew, and show that you are sound, and that you do believe in Moses, and in sacrifices, and in the temple. But," said they, "we have told those people in yonder city that all they need to do is, not touch blood, or things offered to idols, and to keep themselves from fornication."

Does not this show that different men, under different circumstances, are to be treated differently? Does it not show that men must be educated to a certain point before you can successfully attempt to take them from the animal up to the spiritual life?

In the sight of the apostles, men's prejudices and ignorance were realities, and were not treated with rude assault, but were taken into tender consideration.

Suppose a surgeon should go into a household where a man had a vast wen on his neck, and, while he shook hands with him very gently with one hand, should hit the wen a terrible blow with the other? and suppose, when the man complained that that was rude

treatment, the surgeon should say, "Oh, that is nothing but a wen. It is no part of you. I have no idea of respecting your wen. I respect *you;* but that wen has nothing to do with you?" Such a surgeon would be like many reformers, who, because they are men of truth, and perceiving that other men have many prejudices and superstitions, strike them with their fists, as if they were wens, justifying themselves by saying, "They are superstitions; they are prejudices: am I bound to respect these?" No, perhaps not; but you are bound to respect the palpitating heart that lies behind them. You are bound to respect the soul whose superstition or prejudice you assail.

See how gentle the apostles were. See how they said to the Gentile converts, "You may act according to this simple rule;" and see how they turned to Paul, and said, "The brethren in Jerusalem will not understand it if you take your higher view of spiritual life and act according to that. By so doing you will tread on their educated notions. You will grieve and wound them. You will make yourself a hinderance in their way. You will be suspected of infidelity. Now put yourself in line with them." And Paul did.

"To them that are under the law, as under the law;" "to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ)."

It is as if he had said, "I did not give up principle. I was held by a principle; but it was a higher one."

Now is not this liberality a genuine thing? Is it not conformable to the wisdom of love? Is it not conformable to the indispensable necessities of the human family?

Men are blamed because they are breaking away from this or that system. They are called heretics because they do not walk more according to the customs of their fathers. A man should do both things, as far as it is necessary to promote charity: he should reach toward a higher spirituality, in order to lead men up still further; and he has at the same time the liberty of conforming or non-conforming to the regular customs of the community in which he dwells. And in both instances he is so to do it as not to offend. It is to be done as a work of true spirituality; as a means of developing a higher life.

According to this action of the apostle, principles were proclaimed, and then the adaptations of them were left to circumstances. The spirit first, and then the form. If the spirit be right, the principle may safely be left to shape itself. And this is the substance of the testimony of the church of Christ in Jerusalem.

4. What shall we say to Paul's remarkable conduct under this advice? Having been a Pharisee, it is not at all remarkable that

by rebound his ideas of Christian liberty should have become the largest, and that he should have become an apostle to the Gentiles, even more eminently than Peter himself was. Nowhere is personal liberty more insisted upon than in the writings of the apostle Paul. Nowhere shall you find such a noble tribute paid to the authority, and the sole authority of the conscience, the moral sense of man, as contrasted with the authority of law or of ceremony, as in his letters. He declares that a man who is truly in Christ Jesus; who is learned in the spirit of Christ; in other words, that a man who has grown into this higher spirituality, with its intuitions, and its inspirations, will have that which will stand him in stead of all rules and of all ordinances, and of services of every description; that he will be a law unto himself. He resented any intrusion on his personal liberty; and he was jealous for the personal liberty of other men. For more than twenty years he had been preaching this grand doctrine of individual liberty in Christ. He had tested the sufficiency of the Mosaic economy, and had declared that it had failed, through the weakness of the flesh, to bring to pass the thing for which it was ordained. Nay, he had declared that if men went back to it, they abandoned Christ.

And yet, after having preached so long, that Christ was a sufficient sacrifice, and that faith in Christ was a substitute and perfect fulfillment of the whole law, the moment he went up to Jerusalem, and found that he could relieve the consciences of men in the church there by conforming to the law of Moses, he did it. He again offered sacrifices!

Was not that insincere? Well, it would have been insincere under certain circumstances. If he had believed that abstinence from these ceremonies was obligatory, then he would have been insincere. If he had believed, as the Friends or Quakers do, that outward forms must not be used, because they were forbidden by the revelation of the higher life in the Spirit, then he would have been insincere. If he had believed, as do the high church party in any denomination (for every denomination has its high-church party) that there was an exact plan and system ordained of God, and that those who conformed to that system were right, and that those who did not were wrong, then he would have been insincere. But he believed that *in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availed anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.*

This is it: When a man has risen from his lower nature, so that he sees God face to face; when by invisible truths he learns to love God and man, he is in a state in which many things are indifferent to him which would be important under a lower condition. There is an

antinomianism which is spiritually true; and there is an antinomianism which is immoral and debauching; but when one has risen to such a state of moral feeling that he can see God and commune with him, it makes no difference to him whether he observes this and that custom or ordinance or not. He is not affected by baptism one way or the other. He may take it, or he may neglect it. He may partake of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, or he may go without it. These things are helps; but if a man has risen to that state in which he already possesses the Divine Spirit, and is a new creature in Christ Jesus, he is no longer beholden to them. But they are not forbidden to him. He may, therefore, sit down in the temple and take meat that is offered to an idol, and it will make no difference. It will make no difference whether or not he eats herbs or meat. The thing for which all ordinances and governments are appointed, is to instruct men, to exalt them from animal conditions, and to bring them into a higher spiritual nature. And when one is brought up there, he may abide there if he can without any external ordinances: or, if he please, he may observe such ordinances. They are not masters, but instruments.

And so, though Paul had preached that men were not to be circumcised, when he went into Jerusalem, and found that a good end would be served by it, he permitted it. When, before he went to Jerusalem, he saw that it would be a yoke upon the Gentile converts to be held by the Mosaic economy, he told them that they were not bound by it; but when he went to Jerusalem, and found that the Jewish Christians would suppose that he had departed from the faith of the Fathers, and that it would overthrow their confidence in him, because he did not believe in the Mosaic economy, then he conformed.

I know how insincere this will seem to you. But it is because you are under the bondage of external form. It is because you do not yet understand the masterhood of the Spirit. Christ's Kingdom is within us. To Him belongs all that is spiritual. All the external church is human.

Now, in regard to all outside things pertaining to religion, and to churches, and to the whole economy of ordinances and doctrines, you may have them if you can make anything out of them; and if you do not want them, you may go without them. Though, when you go among men that hold them, you will sometimes, for their sake, observe them. You will be to them that are under the law, *as* under the law.

I should not hesitate, if I went into a Roman Catholic church, and all that went with me believed that perhaps I was a Christian,

and dipped their finger in the holy water and made the sign of the cross, to dip my finger in the holy water and make the sign of the cross. I have as much right to the cross as they have; and as to the holy water, if it did not do me any good, it certainly would not do me any hurt.

"Yes, but do not you give encouragement to their wrong beliefs and superstitions?" No more than Paul did to the wrong beliefs and superstitions of the men that stood around about the altar in the temple.

But on the other hand, is there not such a thing as having sympathy with a heart that is bound by superstition? Is it the best way to cure superstition to treat it rudely? Would not treating it tenderly, in such a way as to give a man confidence in your desire to benefit him, be more likely to effect a cure? Is it not wiser to show a man by your gentleness that you regard his feelings, than rudely to tread them under foot? Some things are sacred to one man which are not sacred to another; and each should respect the things which are sacred to the other. Your sacred things ought to be respected by me, and my sacred things ought to be respected by you. But I am not bound to conform to all that you regard as imperative; and you are not bound to conform to all that I regard as imperative. Love gives universal liberty in these things. The spirit of love and faith sets me free from the bondage of ceremony, ordinances, and services, and says to me, "Use them if you need them, and use any of them that you need"; and it says to me, "If you do not need them, you are not bound to use them."

I do not keep Sunday because I think it is obligatory in the sense that the love of God is obligatory. I keep Sunday because I like to keep it; because it is a day of sweetness to my soul. It is my heart's delight; it is honorable to me; and therefore I keep it. I am not bound by days. I am not bound by services or ceremonies. I feel at liberty on the Sabbath day to seek my sanctuary in the forest. Men say to me, "May I worship God in the field?" I say to them, "If you are called to worship God in the field, yes." I may pass a criticism on the sincerity of your claim if I see that you do not want to worship at all, and that you make this a pretext; but if I see that you have a conscience, or spiritual sense, and that the sounding sea, or the leafy forest, or the open fields, with the chanting insects and choiring birds, are instruments of God's grace to you, I say, "In God's name go, dear soul." If you are a child of God, you have a right to seek your Father's presence wherever you can find him in the broad universe, as the bird flies where it will in the pathless air.

The soul that is found out of Christ; the soul that is awakened by the fire of divine love; the soul that is learning to speak the language of Zion; the soul that is hearing and seeing and feeling according as it is taught of God—that soul is its own legislator. And it may go through the tranquility of the unspeaking Quaker Church; it may go through the zealous joyfulness of the Methodist Church; it may go through the polished coldness of the Presbyterian Church, or the didactic Congregational Church; it may go through the stately and complex services of the all-proper Episcopal Church; it may go by the Bishop, or with him, or through him, or over him, or under him; it may go in one way or another; it may go as it pleases—only let it go, *go*, GO!

And for all these heresies (they are shocking heresies I know, in these modern times), I plead the example of the Church in Jerusalem, that worshiped by making sacrifices at the altar, in the temple, thirty years after the death of Christ. I plead the example of the apostles, which is two thousand years old—and the age of a thing, from wine up to creeds, is generally a test of its excellence!

We are prepared, now, to consider some of the difficulties which beset the consciences of men. There has been a great deal of dispute among good and conscientious men as to the doctrine of social responsibility; as to the liability of men in regard to the faith of those whom they countenance. It has come to pass that in a certain organization designed to work for the spread of morality, where those of whom it is composed are well-taught orthodox young men, if those who are invited to coöperate are sadly taught Unitarian youths, at first there is great hesitation; and secondly, there is more than hesitation—there is great conscientiousness—on the part of those who are orthodox. And they say, "We cannot associate with men who deny the Lord that bought them. If we do we shall become partakers of their sins. We shall be lending our countenance to an erroneous belief." But we have before us the example of the Apostle, who lent his countenance to an effete and dead system—that system which was found in the temple, and which Christianity was to supersede. To that system Paul lent his countenance when he did not believe in it. He did not believe in the altar. It was a void, an empty thing to him. But other people believed in it, and therefore he permitted it to do its work for him. He put himself by the side of men who were less instructed than he was; who were wrapped in prejudices; he went with them; yea, and for their sake, he conformed to things externally that to him were nothing. Why did he do it? On the same principle on which he made himself "all things to all men"—"*that he might win some.*"

If a man conforms to superstitions because he does not care for truth, that is wicked; but if a man has a zeal of God, which is always a zeal of love, and for the sake of winning men to a higher life, conforms to things which he has outgrown, but which others have not—that is to say, acts by the side of men without coming into unnecessary jar and conflict with their educated beliefs—he does right.

It is a narrow orthodoxy that cannot work with anything but itself. God, that spreads the sun everywhere over the world, works with everything—even with devils. And they that are of God feel a certain omnipresence of charity. And they can include in their honest zeal of love, every human creature, high or low; and yet without endorsing their specific beliefs because they work with them.

When, during the terrible disaster at New Hamburg, men were rushing in crowds to rescue from the wrecked cars those that were in them, or to drag from the water those that had been thrown into it, do you suppose it was necessary for them to stop and say, "Are you a Republican? or are you a Democrat? Because I am not going to be seen working alongside of a man not of my political belief, and have people suppose that I endorse all his abominable political doctrines?" Would not that have been monstrous? And yet, in Brooklyn, within my time, for years and years, the Sunday schools of the Unitarian churches were not allowed to walk in procession with the Sunday schools of the orthodox churches, on anniversary days; and the Unitarian churches had to draw off their schools and form processions on other days; because it was feared that the little orthodox children would catch some heresy from the little Unitarian children, if they were allowed to walk with them in the streets! Over that scene, Christ was sad, and the devil was glad!

Why, if you have the power of Christ with you; if you are earnest, honest, genuine in your love of Christ, and if, above all other things, you have the gift of God, there is not a human being on earth that worships, that you cannot go and worship with him. What if he is not worthy? You have nothing to do with that. You stand or fall to your own Master. But the zeal of love makes you brother to him. I could sit and worship in many a Unitarian church; in many a Universalist church; in many a Swedenborgian assembly. I could sit and worship to edification in many an old hoary church of Rome, and in many a High Episcopal church. I could sit and worship with my Methodist brethren, or with my Baptist brethren. I could go through the water, if there were any moral end to be secured by it. I would not hesitate to be immersed,

as I immerse others, if so I could gain others. What is immersion or sprinkling to me? These things are as nothing. They are but the straw. Straw may be very necessary to bear up the wheat; but when the wheat has been borne up till it has ripened, then I want the wheat, and not the straw. But churches often save the straw and chaff, and let the wheat go where it will!

But many feel bound to be witnesses for the true religion. Now, I can understand that in corrupt periods, in times of darkness, and as a transient device by which to produce a moral impression, ministers and churches may hold themselves exclusive. I can understand that, where a church has corrupted the notions of the community, a handful may separate themselves from it, and refuse to commune with it, without necessarily violating the spirit of love, because they are trying to make an impression in favor of a higher spirituality. For a limited period, and for a specific purpose, that may be right; but ordinarily such exclusiveness would not be right.

There be many persons who will not commune at the Lord's table in their own church. Why? Because there is a wicked family going to sit down there, and their conscience will not permit them to sit down at the Lord's Table with a family that is so notoriously wicked. It may be that they have taken the wickedest advantage of you; it may be that they have robbed you of your property or your good name; but they shall give account of their conduct to God, as you shall of yours. You go to the Lord's Table to commune with your Lord. And you might just as well say that you would not live in the same town with these people, or that you would not obey the same laws that they obey, or that you would not drink water out of the same river that they do, or that you would not take the same sunshine that they take, or receive the same showers that they receive, as to say that you will not go to the same church that they go to, or sit at the same table that they sit at. To your own Master you stand or fall. You might sit at the Lord's Table with a pirate on one side of you, and a murderer on the other, and it would be no testimony that you believed in piracy or murder. It would simply be a testimony that you sought Christ for yourself. The Church of England has been thrown into a nine days' horror because a Socinian scholar was allowed to sit at the communion table with orthodox scholars! It was not the Bishop's table. They were not Lords, giving entertainments to their Peers. They were themselves but miserable sinners asking God's grace among other sinners equally miserable.

Nay, more than that, if I thought that by going into an assembly of heretics I could leaven heresy with orthodoxy, or substitute ortho-

doxy for heresy, and replace lies by truth, I would not hesitate to go among them. I will associate with those that are out of the way if I can do good thereby. The whole theory of the Gospel, the whole spirit of Christ, is opposed to that rigidity, to that fear of compromising orthodoxy, which has prevailed in the Christian Church.

"Well, but, is there not to be a distinction between truth and error, and between good men and bad men?" Oh, yes, righteousness is to be the distinction. A better spirit is to be the distinction. A truer, deeper love is to be the distinction. More disinterested zeal is to be the distinction. A purer spirituality is to be the distinction. The distinction between a man and his fellow-men is not to be in the shape of his hat, nor in the cut of his coat, nor in the color of his garments. The marks of distinction are not necessarily to be external. You are to be more disinterested than they are. You are to be more free from pride and anger than they are. You are to be more richly bountiful, more nobly generous, more truly liberal, than they are. Such is to be the distinction between you and the world.

Here is a miserable old cinnamon rose, that does not bear blossoms to amount to anything; but it is very proud because it stands in rich, yellow loam. And it has great contempt for that damask rose, which stands in gravel and naturally poor soil, although it is covered with fine blossoms. The blossoms on the cinnamon rose are wretchedly poor; they look like an old bachelor's niggardly kiss, all shriveled and shrunk up; but the blossoms on the damask rose are large and beautiful and fragrant; and yet, the cinnamon rose will not commune with the damask rose. Why? Because it stands in sacred yellow loam! It makes no account of the fact that it has poorer leaves and poorer blossoms, and is poorer every way, than the other rose.

And so it is with Christians. You shall see poor, starveling Christians in fair pots, and rich, plump, blossoming Christians in poor pots. Here is a miserable, leafless, blossomless Christian; but he has got into a High-Church pot; and he will not speak to one of those great blossom-bearing Methodist people in that vulgar tub!

Is it not time, now that Christianity has traveled down as far as to our day, that at last we should learn that in Christ Jesus all are one, and that the point of unity does not lie in creeds, nor in Church forms, nor in Church ceremonies, nor in Church governments, nor in Church polity. The unity which Christ came to bring into the world, is that which comes from that higher state of mind which is the spirit of universal love. There we are to stand together.

Lastly, this history will throw a light upon the spirit of modern reformation. There are many men who think you are not sincere if

you do not tell all you know, and just as soon as it dawns on you. And so, what they got yesterday, they empty themselves of to-day; and what they get to-day they will empty themselves of to-morrow. There are many who think the truth must not be withheld, and that they must be forever gushing, gushing, gushing. There are many who suppose that if a man thinks anything, he must of necessity say it; and that to withhold it is suppression; and that to adapt it to the growing necessities of the community is inconsistent with sincerity.

Now, that a man may have interested reasons for withholding the truth, is certain; but if a man is to let out all he knows and thinks on all occasions, then there are no such hypocrites as schoolmasters—unless it be mothers. A mother does not tell her dear little daughter everything that she knows—not when she is five years old. When she is five years old, she tells her what she needs to know at five years of age. And when she is ten years old, she tells her a great deal more. And when she is fifteen years old she tells her a great many more things. The mother adapts her telling to the need and capacity of the child. For love rules. And the object of truth is not to make a man stand as a light-house and shine out his own glory. Truth is food that we feed to the soul; and we are to adapt it to the soul, as we adapt food to children. It is medicine; and we must use it as medicine. If, therefore, withholding works best for the cause of truth, withhold; and if speaking works best for the cause of truth, speak. We are not half so much under obligation to speak all the truth as we are to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of perfectness. We owe more allegiance to love than to anything else.

The heart is my master. It is the heart that God crowns. With the heart man believes unto salvation. We are to strive, therefore, to keep our hearts right. And in working for others, our object should be to make the right impression on their hearts. I mean to make men better; and sometimes I do it by silence, and sometimes by oral instruction. And I have a right to exercise my judgment as to the method which it is best for me to pursue.

I do not preach here everything that I think. Why do I not? Because I do not know that I believe it yet. There is nothing in this world that requires such long seasoning and ripening as new thoughts. Men seem to think that the pulpit ought to be like an apple-press where greedy boys run, and each sticks his straw into the vat, and sucks the unfermented juice. The farmer would say to the boys, "No, let the juice stand, and let the impurities be worked off; and then, in six or eight months, you will see the real, true cider, or wine of the apples." And so it is with truth. It takes longer for

the truth to work itself free from impurities than any other thing. And only after it has some age do you know the real quality of truth. And who am I that I should undertake to explore the illimitable fields of truth! The truth requires ages and the concurrent thoughts of myriads of men to give it confirmation. God does not reveal the truth through single heads, but by multitudes and through the ages.

Therefore, for a man who has a brilliant idea to rush at once into publicity with it, is not acting in the spirit of true charity, nor according to the dictates of sound philosophy. It is not the duty of investigators to make known their discoveries, or fancied discoveries, instantly. I would say to every young preacher or teacher, You are not bound to say things just because you have thought of them, or because they seem to you to be true. You have a higher mission. You are sent into the world to lead men to God and heaven. And it is your business, as far as you can, to do it by old truths. But so far as it is necessary for you to have newer truths, if you can find them, use them. I am bound to take care of God's children, that are so dear to him. My children, the babes that blossomed in my household, were dear to me as myself, and were a part of myself; and into what paroxysms of indignation would I have been thrown if any nurse had played experiments on those babes! And God looks with indignation upon men who are playing fantastic tricks with his children, by their crude philosophies and half-fledged notions of theology, no matter under what names they are doing it.

Your allegiance is to God, and to the souls of your fellow-men; and these other things are subsidiary and instrumental. The great end to be sought is the elevation, the ennobling, and the salvation of men. Do not lose sight of that, whatever means your judgment may lead you to employ in bringing it about. And remember that they who turn many from their sins, shall themselves at last shine as stars in heaven.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

Again, blessed Saviour, thou hast been in our midst, and little children have come unto thee. Thou hast called them. Thou hast taken them, as it were, in thine arms, and laid thine hands upon them, and blessed them. Bless them from day to day. And grant that the blessing of love and wisdom in their parents may be to them as a crown of gladness all the days of their life. Oh, how many weary steps must their little feet tread! Oh, how many unknown ways must they pursue! What storms shall beat upon them! No love can shelter them from pain, and sorrow, and temptation, and sin, and repentance, and sin again. They must take up their march in the long and weary procession which has been moving through the world since the race began.

God of our fathers, and our God, whose mercy has been upon us, and in whose strength we have been able to walk, and whose love has watched over us, and whose spirit has been breathed into us, vouchsafe that same mercy to these little ones that has been vouchsafed to us. And grant that their lives may be preserved. Or, if they are ordained to go early, grant that their parents may be comforted, and that they may be purified by zeal for the inheritance of life.

We pray that in all the families of this Church the truth may abide, as in a temple. And while parents have their children with them, may they guide them; and may they not forget, from day to day, to give thanks to God for all the mercy which he has bestowed upon them through their children. For the joy which they have had, for the instruction which they have received while instructing their children, for all that they have learned of Christlike ways, for all that they have learned of self-sacrifice, by giving their lives for the lives of others, may they give thee thanks.

And we pray that wherever thy Spirit dwells in any household, it may be rich and strong. And in any household where the light of thy love is not, let it be kindled. Let there be no family in our midst which has not an altar of Devotion. Let no parent who is attempting to rear a household of children, be ignorant of God from whom all their mercies come. We pray that parents may be a blessing to their children, and that children may be a blessing to their parents. And may they both live in the purest joy which is possible to this hither life. Grant that they may live with something of immortality in that life.

And we beseech of thee, O Lord our God! that thou wilt grant to this whole Church the Spirit of Christ. May the young that are in our midst come up continually in memory before us. May we pray for them, in the sanctuary and in the household. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that the prayers of parents that can no longer be heard on earth, for their children, may at last be effectual; and may many be brought back by the memory of the petitions of their father and mother in their behalf. And may the teachings of their parents at last take effect, and they be held by a secret anchor amidst the currents and storms of life.

And we pray that thou wilt bless all that labor for the young, in Sabbath-schools and Bible-classes. We pray for thy blessing upon teachers that in schools are from day to day seeking to instill knowledge, and especially that knowledge which is the foundation of a virtuous character, into the minds of those that are under their charge. May they more and more feel the Spirit of Christ, and be sustained by the comforting hope of immortality.

And we pray that thou wilt remember those who have none to care for them; whose parents are their worst foes. Raise up friends for those who

* Immediately following the baptism of children.

are outcasts. May they be rescued from temptations that are carrying them away as a flood.

And may this whole community be cleansed of immorality and of animalism. And more and more may men believe in morality and virtue and true piety. May men learn the things that pertain to a true charity. We pray that thou wilt cleanse the hearts of men from all bitterness, and all evil and malign passions, and all things that are unholy. And we pray that the whole community among whom we dwell may be shaped more and more to the true forms which religion inspires.

Bless thy Churches that are laboring for thy cause. May they have religion from on high. And through their instrumentality may thy people be brought more and more unto thee. We pray for the spread of thy Gospel throughout our land. We pray for its establishment where it has not yet gained a footing. We pray for its perfect work where it is but imperfectly developed. We pray for its power to reform laws and magistracies wherever they need the touch of the Gospel light.

And we pray that thy kingdom may come, not only in our land, but in all lands throughout the earth. Pity the conditions of men. Make haste, thou that hast given thy Son a sacrifice for the sins of the world, and that in love wilt make that sacrifice effectual—make haste. Let not the years long delay, but bring to pass the glory of thy perfect state—the latter-day glory.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit.—*Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt bring us back again into the Spirit of our Master, and into the spirit of the Apostles. May we be ashamed of our childish faiths in things external. May we take them or reject them as we take or reject garments of colors. May we seek charity out of a pure heart and a good conscience. May we seek to live in the spirit of true love. And bring us at last to that haven where we shall see thee, and all shadows shall depart, and truth shall become to us as the breath of our life. And to thy name shall be the praise forever more.—*Amen.*

LOVE-SERVICE.

"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."—Gal. v. 13, 14.

There is almost universal approbation given to the doctrine of benevolence. This is the point in which almost all sects of religion converge and agree; and it is at this point that the church and the world seem more likely to come to an agreement than anywhere else. For I hear men of every sort speaking about the beauty of Christ's loving character. I hear men inveighing against clear philosophical statements as being not the food of the Gospel, which is love. And when wickedness is rebuked, it is the meek and lowly Jesus that men say that they want to hear about, and not the acerb and authoritative commander of virtue. Men boast themselves that "they have not much religion; but then, they have a great deal of kindness." They are very kind at home. They are very kind in their neighborhood. They will sometimes tell you that they do not know how to sing as many hymns, perhaps, as their neighbors; but that they give away more to the poor. And so, while one plumes himself upon piety, another offsets that, in his own case, with charity. And you will hear men talking among themselves as if it were a matter of common consent, and almost of universal acceptance, that religion requires true benevolence. Yet, whenever true benevolence in the Scriptural and in the best sense of the term is fairly opened to men, not only is there nothing that they are so loth to accept, but they positively deny its existence, and the possibility of its existence. And there is no other one test that is so searching, so penetrating, so sin-convicting, so despair-inspiring, as this simple test—good-will—disinterested benevolence.

Now, the passage that we read contains inconspicuously in it the very criterion, in one single word:

Sunday Morning, Mar. 26, 1871. Lesson: Eph. III. Hymns (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 31, 431, 1259.

"Brethren, use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love *serve* one another."

The translated word, is, perhaps, as good as any that we have, because it is not English to say, "Slave one another;" but that is the original. The verb has the same root as the substantive; and it signifies, *to serve as the slave serves the master.* We are, therefore, in the service of love, to fulfill to each other the duties of love as the faithful slave fulfills his duties to the man that owns him.

And what, in the most general aspect, is the peculiarity of the service of a slave? It is this: that he takes the forces of his own nature for another's benefit, and not for his own. That is the ideal. A true and willing and faithful slave thinks for the master; works for the master; feels for the master; puts himself in the master's place; and uses all the power he has, not for his own individual good, but for the good of the master. Therefore says the apostle, "We are so to live that we shall *slave it* for each other." It is the crucial test, it is the innermost nature, it is the real characteristic of a true love, to be willing to serve another. Benevolence is well-wishing, doubtless; and it often flows from men without requiring sacrifice; but when there is need, all true love has in it the capacity and necessity of suffering for another. And when the time comes, any love that fails there, shows that it had no root, no reality; that it was a superficial quality; that it was an imitation, and not a genuine article. For that which makes the difference between a true love and a merely imitative love, is this: that a true love always carries in it a power of self-negation, and of self-sacrifice, and of suffering for another.

Consider whether this is so in life. Look at that form of affection which passes by the general name of *friendship.* We may make a distinction between an acquaintance and a friend. Although in the most ordinary conversation we speak of friends and acquaintances as almost the same, yet every one knows that there is a difference—that there are some friends that we clasp to ourselves as we do not those that are merely our ordinary and pleasant acquaintances.

Now, when you have analyzed it to the root, that which makes the difference between these and common friends, is, that there is an element of disinterestedness in a true and in a model friendship. It is giving to a friend that which the spirit of friendship requires that we should give, not only without return, but without a thought of return. It often is the glory of a gift that it is so given that there can be no return—that there is no commercial element in it. It is helping one at our own expense, when it is needful, that marks

friendship. It is assuming another's life, as it were, and making it our own. It is fidelity in the presence of suffering. It is taking the care, and sorrow, and loss, and trouble, of another as if it were our own. It is putting our souls under another man's soul, and bearing him, as it were. It is carrying one another's burdens.

Hence, there are very few friendships. There are many pleasant acquaintances, and there are many acquaintances that are gilded with friendship; but it is only now and then that you find, where two come together, and love each other, that one stands everywhere for the other, in good and in ill, in prosperity and in adversity, so that one goes up and goes down with the other. There are few friendships of that kind. In other words, there are few friendships which carry in them the root of the matter, which is disinterestedness. The power and the willingness to serve and to suffer—that does not inhere in the ordinary swarms and droves of worldly friendships. Ordinarily, friendships are mere commercial arrangements. They are bargains between the easy affections, one saying to another, "You make me happy, and I will make you happy; and as long as you make me happy, you are my friend; but when you cannot do it any longer, then we go apart." That is the way of the world. What is generally called friendship, is an exchange of commodities of happiness. For the most part, hearts are shopped, friendship is a bargain, and friends are traffickers. But there are friendships that are higher; and there are friends that are so bound together that if one is sick the other is by his side; and the sickness of the one is almost as if it were in the body of the other. The weal or the woe is common to them. There are men who clasp men. There are friendships between woman and woman that are as pure and as deep as it is possible to be; and they have the peculiar quality of *serving* in them to such a degree that each is the slave of the other. Each knows how to give everything for the other.

You cannot have a great many such friendships. They are too costly. There is not time to cultivate many of them. One or two are about as many as a man can attend to in this world. You can have kindly feelings toward multitudes; but when it comes to the matter of serving, and when your conscience is another man's conscience, and when your heart, like a bell, is struck every time he is in trouble, it is about as much as you can find time to do to take care of that one man. But, in general, there is an inaptitude to this. Nature has not learned this higher lesson with much facility.

There is a state, however, beyond this. This friendship of which I have been speaking, is a friendship in which there is no passion; but where friendship ripens into what we call love, it is something

beyond common friendship, excluding from it the ordinary concomitants of passion, which in the order of nature attend it, but which are casual, and relative to a transient state of existence, cleansing it from these mere terrene elements, and coming to that which is true love—which is characteristic of it—which is the root of it. In love, more even than in friendship, is the power to serve another; or, in other words, the power to put one's being, all aflame with intensity of unselfishness, into another's atmosphere. It is the power of one soul to so identify itself with another that they scarcely, for the time being, are distinguishable—and that, not from passion, nor from sentiment, nor from necessity, but simply from a true, deep affection.

Men do not think of love so, because there are so very few who rise to that experience of a true affection. And they give their heart grudgingly. Most of what is called love in this world has stolen a precious name to cover a vile surface of the passions. But when men do truly love, there is an enthusiasm in it; there is a self-renunciation in it; there is an intense desire to make another happy; there is almost the forgetting of one's own existence; there is a carelessness about one's own happiness; there is a sense of the honor of another; there is a wish for that other's growth; there is a power and an energy put forth in developing the life of the loved one, as if your life lay in it.

Men have a glimpse of this in the earlier stages of that which terminates in wedded love. Every ingenuous young man and maiden, when they come together with a sincere and honorable affection, know some hours in which each is quite forgetful of self. Their thought of life is to honor each other, and to lift each other up, and to glorify each other. And that is the nearest to the angelic experience that these persons ever come. Alas! that such love should be like the hyacinth. It throws its blossom up early in the Spring; and it is quickly gone, sweet as it is. Before ever May is half passed the blossom is withered, a few brown leaves lie withering on the ground, and all the rest of the summer nothing but the bulb lies in the dirt. And so unworthy, so poor, so mean, is the termination of too many, *too many*, of those attachments which began in honor, which went on in beauty, and which showed some touches of genuine love, in that there were hours, or days, in which true hearts loved with a desire to serve, and not to be served.

But there is no friendship, and there is no love, like that of the parent to the child—that is, the typical parent; for there are all grades of development in parentage. When there is great strength of nature, great breadth of understanding, great richness of moral nature, and great affection; when all these cohere symmetrically

and wisely, then the love of the parent to the child comes nearer, I suppose, to divinity, than anything else that we can find in this world. There is nothing else on earth that comes more near to it.

The parent's love is not one that exercises itself in exigencies only. The whole drift of thought, in the voluntary and unconscious love of every parent, surrounds the household and the children.

A boy is born. The parents are poor. On a penurious farm they are rearing their children—five, six, seven, eight—for God pays poverty with better coin than gold and silver. There is one boy set apart for an education. He will be the glory of the house. Not only do the father and the mother think it, but with almost supernatural ingenuity they work to accomplish it. Why, that old farm is vexed, from the top to the bottom of it, by the love of those parents, that they may make it wring out a little more, that there may be something saved; for that boy *must* be sent to college. And early, long before the birds are stirring, they are up; and late, when the children are far along in their dreams, father and mother are still toiling. Brown is their skin, like parchment; but oh! what lore there is in such parchment! What stories such brown faces tell! They toil through ten, through fifteen years; and they are able, at last, to send their darling boy away. What bone could do, what muscle could do, what nerve could do, what courage could do, what patience could do, what perseverence could do, day and night, through years and years, they did; they denied themselves necessary food, they went scantily clad, mortifying their pride, and carrying themselves in apparel among their fellow-men more mean than any others; and all that they might husband and hoard a little pittance that should educate their darling boy. And he may be said to light, by the marrow of father and mother, the candle by which he gains his education. And so, for years they are on the treadmill of inexorable industry. And at last—oh, woesome day—no such eclipse ever happens in the heaven, when the sun ceases to shine, as come to that father's and that mother's heart!—the boy has disgraced himself, and is expelled! Oh, sun! forget to shine. Oh, moon! let night cover thee with darkness. What tears! What anguish! What heartaches, that will not groan, and cannot groan! What dead people they are, that grope at noonday, and know not whither to go! Yes, the boy is disgraced, and is cast out! For him they had given everything. Where shall he go? What shall he do? He shall go home. There are father and mother; and there are not on earth any others that will take him so kindly, that will listen to every word that he says so patiently, that will soothe his shame, that will build him up again, and that will go on another term of

service to put him forward, like father and mother, when they love with a love that knows how to serve.

Is not that the genuine article? Is not that the typical idea? Is not that the love from which you ought to take your idea of what benevolent love is in life? Serving one another—is there no such thing as that in this world? I tell you, there is a great deal of gold that is not generally recognized. And there are a great many mines of treasure, if people would only search for them.

I have gone through these familiar instances to show you what I mean by a true love, in distinction from a selfish or commercial one. It is a love that gives everything, and does not ask nor take. It is a love that *serves*. "Serve one another in love," says the apostle.

Is this that which is meant in the Scripture? Is this that benevolence which the Bible speaks of, and means to inculcate as the law of a God of love, as the law of the universal realm, as the eternal law? Yes, this is it. Of that there can be no doubt.

First, let us see whether our Saviour taught that, when he said what he did to his disciples, on one of the most memorable occasions in his life:

"He [Jesus] riseth from supper, [this was just preceding his passion and crucifixion], and laid aside his garments: and took a towel, and girded himself [this was the way that slaves usually did. He laid aside his garments, and put on service-garments]. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter; and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, [they were all full of amazement, unquestionably: they did not know what it could mean, that he should be seized with such a sudden start, and get up from the table, and go round and wash their feet, and then put on his garments, and come back to the table and sit down. They could not make it out. And so he explains it.] Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, [an ordinance—a symbolical act], that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him."

"Here, then," says Christ, "is the law of your life. Wash one another's feet, as the symbolic image of that service of true love and benevolence which is the essential element of the divine law."

Look, now, at the expansions of this idea, as they are given in the letters of Paul. Take, for instance, the second of Philippians, beginning with the fifth verse :

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth."

Here, then, we have the meaning of Christ's sacrifice. These declarations of the Saviour himself, and these expository utterances of the apostles, show what was the sacrifice of Christ. And this sacrifice is the most magnificent exemplification of that inherent sacrifice which goes with all true love. There is in it, there is at the bottom of it, there is as its fundamental quality, and its discriminating element, that power of suffering and serving. How much you love anything can be easily measured by how much you will suffer for it—by how much you will serve for it. If you will serve none, then you love none. If you will serve but little, then you love but little. If you will serve a great deal, then you love a great deal. And if you will serve utterly, you thoroughly love. What was the meaning of this sacrifice, what its relations were on the side of God, only God knows; but in so far as as we are concerned, the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ was the sublime and universal exhibition of divine love, and of the peculiar quality of all true love. The power and willingness to suffer and to serve—that is the core of divinity. It is not thinking power, it is not creative power, it is love power, that is the essential test of divinity.

Men want to know whether Christ is divine, and they test him as a chemist would test the quality of any substance. They, as it were, take a pair of scales, and throw one text on this side, and one in that side; and then they throw another on this side, and another in that side; and then they say, "If I had one more text for this side, I think divinity would weigh down the other side." And they hunt for another text. And so they weigh the divinity of Christ as though it were a ponderable element. But it is not magnitude that is divinity. That which is distinctive, that which crowns universal sovereignty, is the crown of love. And that which distinguishes love from every other quality, is, that it is a well-wishing or benevolent impulse, that carries itself out, if need be, in infinite service, and service that carries with it, also, infinite love. If the

world is struggling upward toward a higher development of true manhood, God, the Almighty, stands by, helping men's throes toward universal elevation by that love which thinks, which cares, which bears, which suffers. That which we see in the Lord Jesus Christ specialized for the wants of this world, was not that which made him different from the Father, but was simply a manifestation of the Father—a section, an hour, as it were, let down,—one single transaction, as an exposition of what is going on in heaven from eternity to eternity, by a love which legislates, and works, and serves.

There is no other Servant like God. There is no other Being that labors with so much assiduity, and that so humbles himself, and so bows down under weakness, and so lifts up with his strength, and so wastes the unwasteable existence of the infinite, as God, in the plenary service of love.

Not only is this that which constitutes divinity, but it is the life and the joy of God—doing good, not easily, not pleasingly, not reciprocally, but to the just and to the unjust, to the good and to the bad alike. And it is the nature of love to serve.

How far this is from the old monarchical view of God! How far it is from that view of a jealous, and self-praising, self-glorifying God, that has been so much preached in the world! I have read scores of volumes, and I can take from my shelves a hundred volumes, that represent God as a Being that requires all the universe to be parasites; and that surrounds himself, as a weak ruler in a corrupt court surrounds himself, with creatures that only bow the supple knee, and study phrases of praise, and do everything that is abject, he himself sitting up and drinking in power, and honor, and glory, for his own selfish sake; and, what is more monstrous, still sweeping the lines of creation further and further out, to augment the store of flattery that comes in, almost fathomless, toward him.

Now, is selfishness any better for being almighty? Are self-praise and self-laudation any better for being infinite? If they be mean in the small, and within the bounds of reason, how much meaner are they extended into infinity! There is no being in the universe that, being sovereign, and working for others, is so self-abnegating, and pours the store of his divine thought and feeling and nature out for those that are in need, as God does. He seeks others that he may do them good. *It is more blessed to give than to receive*, is the definition of the thought of God.

This is the secret, too, of heavenly joy. It indicates the preparation that we require before we are prepared to go up and enter upon the future state of bliss.

If this exposition be true, we are prepared for a few points of personal application.

First, I may remark upon the spuriousness of much of that friendship existing in the world, which is mere barter and sale—which is a commerce between hearts in which they buy and sell each other's service, and each other's good will. I merely mention that.

I may also say that this is a test of what is called *good nature.* There be many persons who suppose that good nature is kindness. It has not one attribute of it, necessarily. Half the time good nature is good digestion—that is all. Half the time good nature is nerves well sheathed in adipose matter. Many men do not feel, and are not irritated; and why should they not be kind and easy-going? Why, I can show you hundreds of blessed, sweet-cheeked, sunny-faced, plump-bodied men, who go through the world kindly. I do not undervalue them. They lubricate the ways of life; but they ought not to call themselves by false names. Good nature is a good thing; but, after all, it is a very superficial thing. It is far more physical than mental. And it is not active; it does not put forth effort; it does not energize anything; it does not suffer for the sake of doing good to other people. There are many acerb men; there are many hard-faced men; there are many rough, severe men, who, though they will hew you with their tongue, will put forth ten times as much true serving love for you as these waxy-cheeked, good-natured, abdominal men.

While, therefore, good-nature makes the intercourse of society pleasanter, by greasing the wheels of life so that they go with less friction and less squeaking, do not let men suppose that this is the equivalent for the benevolence of the Gospel. Many men think that they are benevolent because they are not malign. But if virtue consisted in *nots*, how virtuous the world might be! The less there was of a man, the more virtuous he would be! If it is virtue in a man that he does *not* steal, and that he does *not* swear, and that he does *not* break the Sabbath, and that he does *not* knock down everybody that he meets, and that he does *not* murder, and that he does *not* get drunk, and that he does *not* get angry,—then there are many virtuous men. A man might abstain from all that, and be no more virtuous than a mullein-stalk; for a mullein-stalk stands, and grows, and does not do anything that is wrong. Virtue is not a negative quality. But take a man and give him power, and give him volume, and put him out in life, and give him something to do, and let him transact business among his fellow-men, and then see whether he will maintain the Christian virtues or not. If a man has force, by which he is able to produce positive effects, and he produces those effects in

the direction of well-wishing; if a man has volume, and force of being, and he makes that greatness and that strength subordinate to the welfare of others, not forgetting his own welfare and the welfare of those that are dependent upon him, but in love serving others as well as himself and those that are dear to him, then he is truly virtuous.

But easy, honest good-nature—what is that? Two-thirds of people's generosity spills over. A man's cup is full, and it runs over, and others get the drippings; and then he says, "I do not think God will judge me very harshly. I am a generous fellow. I give away a great deal more than you think." That is, he spills over a good deal, and the dogs come and lick it up, and he thinks that he is bountiful. But do you suppose these accidents, do you suppose these mere alternations mount up to the stature of positiveness, and grandeur, and dignity of divinely inspired virtues?

I may also say that this view of love, as serving, ought to go as a fire into many and many a heart in the household. It is a test that very few of us can bear. There are hundreds and thousands, I think, who under that test would say, "I do believe that I love; but oh, how imperfectly!" Though we have this ideal, how little do we carry it out! If there were such a love as this in the household, what a revolution it would produce! The parents serve the children; and the children serve one another; and the little child, when the impulse is on it, will throw its arm about the mother's and father's neck; brothers and sisters will kiss each other, and make up their differences; and these things are very well—there is no objection to them; but how much will parents and children give up for one another? And how continually will they give up, each for the others? In the family, happiness is in the ratio in which each is serving the others, putting the whole force of his being at the service of those others. Happiness in the family consists in its members seeking each other's good, and bearing each other's burdens. It is the presence or absence of this self-sacrificing love that determines the happiness or unhappiness of the household. And yet, how few there are who think themselves good brothers and sisters that can say that they have and exercise that love? How many young men there are that have just turned the age of fifteen or sixteen, and that are beginning to go out into society, who would be fighting mad, if you were to say to them, "You have no special love for your sisters!" And when they go out they are generous fellows, full of friendship and affection. And yet, they will take some maiden out of the family, and bestow all their attention upon her, and their poor sisters can go without a beau. There is many a brother

unwilling to serve; and yet he resents the idea that he does not love his sister. You may love your sister, but you do not love her so well as you do yourself. You will form a friendship where you get back as much as you give. You make acquaintances, saying, "You please me, and I will please you; you make me happy, and I will make you happy," and that is what you call forming friendships. But where there is to be nothing but making another happy, because love in you longs to serve another, and to promote happiness in that other, you are found wanting. How many there are in the family who think they love, but who do not love; or who, if they do love, only love with an affection that, compared with a true disinterested love, is as copper compared with gold.

If this be the true exposition of that love which the Gospel requires, how superficial are the ordinary and popular notions of benevolence! How superficial are the world's ideas of giving! How superficial are the current notions in regard to public spirit! How superficial are the ideas of men on the subject of being willing to do for persons whom they never saw, and never will see! How imperfect is the popular conception of the higher manly graces, if this service of true love, the voluntary slavery of the soul for another's sake, is the true standard!

One reason why there is so little power in the Church, is the adulterated nature of Church love. There is very little of the heavenly affection among men. There is very much of the affection of the mart. There is interchange, there is traffic, there is sectarian affection, which is nothing but pride and selfishness interchanged. There is very little love in Churches. But if there were in Churches tens, and scores, and hundreds of souls that had been trained to this higher development, and if they ignited together, and brought the whole power of their souls to bear upon the community, is there any community that could stand the light and heat of such churches?

Men often wonder that they are so little blessed in their labor among their fellow men. "Why," they say, "I have prayed, and I have prayed, and I have prayed, and it seems to me that there is no no such thing as a prayer of faith being answered. I have prayed long and earnestly for men, and it seems as though God never would hear my prayer." Did you ever *serve* anybody in love?

There is a figure in the fourth chapter of Galatians, that I will read, with your permission.

"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."

"That is a bold figure, but a very grand one. Do you believe that it is in your power to take another person in your soul, and

carry him as a mother carries her unborn child, day and night, not an hour unconscious, in travail, until Christ be formed in him—do you believe you can minister to a soul in this way, and have that soul escape you? I do not. And if you are so little useful, it is because you have so little disinterestedness. It is because you do not know how to *serve.*

Once more, we see why it is that the higher Christian graces are so seldom developed. We go after Christian graces as the woman of Samaria went to Christ, when he sat by the well, and discoursed to her of the quality of that water which he would give her, she all the time interpreting it as the water of the well that was before them. She said, "Sir, give me of this water, that I come not here to draw." The idea with her was that it would be a great satisfaction to have water that welled up perpetually, so that nobody should thirst again. She did not want to take the trouble to go and draw water to quench daily thirst.

We go to God and say, "Lord, give me humility; and we would be glad if God would drop it right down into us. We ask him for faith; we ask him for patience; we ask him for spiritual insight; we ask him for joy; we ask him to live or to die; we ask him for various higher developments. But, my friends, these are tropical plants, and they never grow in any climate but a climate as hot as love. You must have this fundamental quality, and carry it to a certain degree of development, before it is possible for you to have these Christian graces. Suppose a person were to plant orange and lemon trees in Canada, and pray God to give him big crops! People would say that the climate of Canada was not calculated to produce oranges and lemons. If a man will go to the southern part of Florida, he need not pray much to get large crops of oranges and lemons; but if he goes to Kamtschatka, he cannot get them by any amount of praying. And we must have right conditions, or we cannot have right virtues.

Here are selfish, worldly men, full of the bartering spirit, full of trafficking affections; here are men that live in a low and chilly state, and yet they are praying for these higher graces, thinking that if they could get them they would rise into a warmer state; but they must get into a warmer state where these graces will grow, before they can have them. Change the climate of the soul, and they will become spontaneous and fruitful. For, as selfishness is the bane and the curse of life, so this love that is disinterested, and that serves, is the bounty and divinity of life.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our Father, we bless thee that there is rest in thee; that the disturbance, the care, and the burden of life have pauses; and that in them, above the noise and above the groans of life, we hear thee speaking peace. Not as the world giveth dost thou give; but that perfect peace which dispels doubt, and fear, and gives rest to every soul. We rejoice that we may trust thee, Heavenly Father, for all daily wants. Thou wilt not forget the sun, that it shall not know its shining; thou wilt not forget the conditions which form the clouds, that they shall not drop down both dew and rain; and thou wilt not forget thy creatures, who look to thee for supply, mutely; nor wilt thou forget us, that are better than the birds or the beasts. And thou knowest all things we are in need of. Thou art evermore providing for us, yet saying, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

O Lord our God! since the day that thou didst reveal to us the secret of eternal life; since we knew where our manhood was; since we sought to fill up the measure of strength in our higher life, we have felt more the need of spiritual bread than of the daily bread which is for the body. These natures can labor, and the measure of reason with which we are endowed can direct our industry to skill, and we can feed and clothe ourselves; but, alas for the poverty of the soul! How to wrestle, how to overcome selfishness on every side, how to build strong against the passions, how to say to the restless pulse of the great sea that rolls within, Peace, be still, we know not. We know as little now as when we first began. How full are we all the morning of resolutions of good! Strait shall be our path, we say. And yet, at night, how crooked has it been! And we hardly know where we began to bend, or what carried us—what weight—what easily besetting sin. But that very night we bury the good purpose of the morning. And then come days of discouragement, when we give up the battle, as if we were not worthy of fighting where are so many wounds, so much disaster, such captivity, and so few victories. But thou callest us again. And we cannot give up the strife for something better than this life. Do not we see how poor and perishable it is at best? Do we not see how joys turn to sorrows, almost in the hour when they are lighted? Do we not see how fast sorrows take hold upon joys, and how they are their constant companions? Where is there stability? Where can we invest our hearts? Turn whither we may, we are discontented. If we pursue the road to holiness, we are weary in well-doing; or, if we drift with selfishness, we still become bent and weary. The world was not made for our living. Here is no abiding city. We dwell not here. We are pilgrims and strangers, and are traveling across this earthly sphere. Blessed be thy name, there is a higher thought than ours, and a better wisdom than ours, and a better purpose that directs our inward life than ours; and by the unrevealed ministration of sorrow and joy, of burden and release, of imprisonment and freedom, thou art carrying forward the work in us little by little. The years serve thee, and time serves thee; and thou art helping us so that as the hours draw near we discern, with more and more clearness, the better life, and our aspiration rises still higher. And we strive with even more alacrity, as the days go on, to live above the flesh, above the sight of the eye, and above our desires and passions, and to live in the communion of God, and in the hope of salvation, through love and grace.

Oh! we beseech of thee that thou wilt help all those who are discouraged; and all those who see in themselves the spark that is struck, yea, the light that is kindled, but see it, alas! as the light that quivers on the point of the wick. Thou wilt not quench the smoking flax until thou bring forth judgment unto victory. And thou wilt not break the bruised reed. Those that are maimed; those that have often been overblown, and have in themselves

no strength,—thou hast compassion upon them, and thou wilt hold them up, so that the wind shall not overturn them.

Blessed be thy name, O thou Father of the Soul! for all thy goodness to us, and for the manifestation of it through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And now, we beseech of thee that we may take courage, not because we are wise, or strong, or patient, or persevering, or successful, but because God is faithful, who has promised. May all our hope be in him. And in the great bounty of thy love, may we have the assurance of our salvation.

We beseech of thee, this morning, in behalf of all that are gathered together here. How many are the wants, how many are the desires —how many that are expressed silently to thee, and how very many unrecognized —heave within the soul, and toss it, for which there are no words! Wilt thou look upon the inward life of every one. Help those that are struggling against their ill-willed passions; those that would subdue vanity; those that would temper pride; those that strive against avarice; those that seek to be less worldly-minded; those that desire more and more to be quickened into a disinterestedness of kindness.

Bless, we pray thee, all those that are endeavoring to stand in the place of God to their little children; who know their own weakness; who perceive their own daily infirmities; who desire to do the best things for their children, and who oftentimes are in the shadow of doubt, lest they should mislead them, and lest they should pervert them in their tender years. Lord, hear the cry of parents' hearts for themselves and for their children.

Grant, we pray thee, that all those who, within the household, are seeking more and more to refine their life, and more and more to let it be a life daily outflowing with all kindness and all beneficence, may have a realization of their desire. Hear their prayer this morning, and strengthen them in every good purpose. And may thy Spirit, Father of all grace and love, dwell in them, and work mightily.

We pray that thou wilt hear, this morning, those that come with hands scarcely washed from the soil of the earth; those that have lost themselves in the week, and have found themselves following the Bright and Morning Star this day. Grant, we pray thee, that as they look back upon the way in which the outward man hath striven, and the inward man hath been smothered and strangled; grant that as they repine and mourn over the follies of the week, they may have not only a feeling of repentance before God, but an intimation of thy Spirit with them. And may they be so strengthened that as their days, so their strength shall be. And may they carry into their own industry a higher motive than mere gain, or their own honor or strength. May they seek to fill the veins of society with better blood. May they seek to serve Christ in their daily calling. May they bear Christ's spirit with them, and preach to men, not so much by the word of their mouth, as by the spirit that they shall manifest, standing humble amidst the proud, loving amongst the selfish, and self-sacrificing among those that would cause others to suffer for their good. We pray that they may be bright examples of true living in this untoward generation. And we pray, O God! that if they to-day repent of their sins, registering against themselves their own transgression, they may have an intimation of thy peace, and of thy grace and mercy to their souls. May they not be afraid to go to God with a confession of their worldliness and sin.

And if there are those who are in perplexity by reason of their fears, and know not which way to turn, grant that to-day they may have a hearing consciously with thee. And may they feel that Providence is real, and that thou thinkest of them. And may they be able to commit themselves and their fears to thee. And may they evermore seek that guidance and wisdom from on high which thou hast promised to give liberally, upbraiding not.

If there are those, desolate and discouraged, who, often beginning, or seeking again and again the right path, have lost it; if there are those who are struggling and striving almost without hope, we pray that thou wilt hold them steadfast in their divine nature. Say unto them, that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And if they have not peace among men, nor in human things, may they have peace with God,—that peace which passeth all understanding.

And if there be those that this morning look upon their life and themselves with great sorrow and horror; if there be those that seek earnestly better things, if there be those that are half-discouraged in this very seeking; if there be those that are as a sailor, seeking the shore from the shipwrecked vessel, but cast back by the refluent wave as oft as he touches the ground, and well-nigh whelmed—if there be such, we pray, O Lord! that they may strive for the better land, and not give up till death. May their souls cry out mightily for help to Him whose ear never slumbers. Hear their cry.

And, O God! if there be those who sit in affliction this morning, pondering the strange way of God with them, in that they have buried their dead, we pray thee to give resurrection in their souls to better thoughts, that they may not think that any are ever buried. May they remember that while the dust goes to dust, the spirit goes to God who gave it. And may all that are bereaved seek their beloved ones in the other life, and above their head, and above the storm, and above the trouble of this world. And if any are pondering the peculiar trial of their bereavments in those that are gone, whom they cannot see again, and with whom no last words were exchanged; if any are mourning over tidings brought from afar, of death in distant lands; if any are sitting with their dead before them; if any are in the maze and stupor of grief, will the Lord have compassion upon them all, and deliver them from the thrall of their sorrow, and say to them, gently, For the present it is not joyous but grievous; but afterward it shall work out the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

And we pray that thou wilt follow the thoughts of those that are here, and bless all whom the heart yearns to bless. Sanctify their friendships. Deepen and purify their loves. Grant, we pray thee, that, walking together in life, with so much to oppose, and so little to help, men may cling more faithfully to each other, and not seek to crowd one another from the way of life, and not put stumbling-blocks in the way of one another. And grant that we may bear one another's burdens, in honor preferring one another; and in all things seek to follow the example of Him who, though rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty might become rich.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon all churches and all ministers, everywhere, this day. May the Gospel be preached with purity and power. Revive thy work in all thy churches. Purify this land. And grant that all the nations on this earth may at last see the dawn of that better day of peace and purity and intelligence, when superstition and ignorance shall be driven from off the globe, and the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters fill the sea.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thy blessing may rest upon the word spoken. Deliver us, we pray thee, from ourselves. Deliver us from the devil that is born in us, and that is down-bearing with everlasting gravitation of selfishness, that carries us back again toward the earth from which we sprang. Touch us with thy nature. Breathe that spirit into us that brought thee, blessed Saviour, from heaven, that we might understand thy life. Oh! that we might see in the meaning of thy great suffering, and thy blessed death, out of which the world has had life brought to it. And may we learn to love with requital. May we learn to serve in love. May we more and more test ourselves by these higher standards. May we repent of the past. May we rise by vision of the future, and of thy divine love, until we are fitted for that higher life, and that more blessed society, of the heavenly land. Then take us home. And to thy name, Father, Son and Spirit, shall be the praise, forever. *Amen.*

THE SOCIAL PRINCIPLE IN RELIGION.

"Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.—Eph. ii., 19-22.

There is a very interesting progress of thought in this passage. The negative is substantially an affirmative.

"Ye are no more strangers."

Considering it in a civil aspect, there was nothing that, to the Jew, to the Greek, or to the Roman, could seem more unfortunate than not to have been born a Jew, or a Greek, or a Roman. They felt to a very considerable extent as we do, who feel that to be born an American is the best birth that one can have—for the first time. They had, in other words, an intensity of national thought and feeling which we can now scarcely recognize.

The Jew accustomed himself to divide the whole world into two classes. The first class, and the only one worth anything, was composed of Jews; and all the rest were Gentiles. They were the great miserable part of mankind, that were not born Jews.

The Greeks felt the same way, except that, being more intellectual and more æsthetic, they had a daintiness in their scorn. They also divided the world into two classes—the fortunate people who were Greeks, and the millions and millions of unfortunate people who were barbarians.

And the Romans, afterwards, regarded Roman citizenship as the very top of earthly privilege; and all the rest—the great outside world—to them, likewise, were barbarians. To be a Roman citizen was not simply an honor: it was a prerogative; it was a protection; it was a power.

We find a reference to the intensity of this feeling recorded in the twenty-second chapter of Acts.

"Then the chief captain came, and said unto him [Paul], Tell me, art thou a Roman?"

Sunday Morning, April 2, 1871. Lesson: Luke XXI. Hymns (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 639, 668, 717.

How did he come to ask that question? Paul had been seized, and, without any trial, had been thrown into prison; and in order to extort testimony from him, they made ready to scourge him. And when they had bound him, and were about to lay on the scourge, he turned to the officer, and said,

"Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?"

"Now, to scourge a *man* would not have been a great sin—manhood went for nothing; but that they were about to scourge a *Roman*, withheld the lash instantly.

"When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman."

Everybody, in the whole civilized world, then stood in awe of that name.

"Then the chief captain came and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. And the captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born."

No one scene that I know of in Scripture, will show what value and what dignity were put upon citizenship, more than this little incident. When, therefore, the apostle said,

"Ye are no more foreigners and strangers,"

it carried with it a thrill of meaning—although it was so spiritualized that we can scarcely appreciate it.

"Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens."

They were brought up higher; they were ennobled; they were dignified. And this is the figure by which the apostle represents the true elevation which takes place when men have entered into the spirit of religious life in Christ Jesus, and are associated together. They form a new citizenship. They are formed on a higher plane. They enter upon a nobler life.

Then the thought progresses:

"Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

After thinking of them as citizens, the next thought naturally was that citizenship was broken up into families; and the thought of the household was even more precious than that of the state. And then came the thought of a household with God as the Father—the household of God.

Then, from this thought he naturally progresses to that which the household represents. And the world over, the household represents the greatest amount of heart-privilege and of refinement. And the enjoyment of any age may be gauged by the quality of its home-life. It has always been so. It will always be so. The family is the institution which stands next to God—next to the divine pulsation. Here is love-equality. Here is privilege without superstí-

tion. Here is less of the artificial and more of the natural than anywhere else. We come nearer the spontaneous impulse of the soul without imposing ceremonies, and without conventional institutions, and yet with fullness, and reality, and power, in home-life than in any other combination. Nowhere else is there so much of every person's life acting so freely, so strongly, so directly, and so usefully, as in the family.

Therefore, when the Apostle spoke of Christians gathering together in church fellowship, and said, "They are redeemed from the condition of barbarians or Gentiles, as it were, and brought into citizenship," that meant a great deal. And when he said, "They belong to the household of God; they have all the amenities and privileges and preciousness of the intercourse that belongs to the household," he said still more.

In speaking of the household, he naturally thought of the house. And instantly the figure changed into an architectural one.

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone."

That is, you are built, not on the apostles, and on the prophets. as if they were the foundation; but you are built up with them, so that you stand on the same foundation that they do. Both you and they stand on the divine foundation.

'And are built upon the foundation of the apostles, and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord."

Nothing was so sacred in the eyes of antiquity as a temple, because private houses were so squalid, relatively. When Athens was the glory of the world, when her marble shone almost like the rays of the sun to one that approached the city, her streets were narrow, her dwellings were small, and all their appointments were mean. And when the apostle would speak of a building that had some circumstance and dignity, he naturally took as an example that which was glorious in the eyes of antiquity—the temple in Jerusalem, the Acropolis in Athens, or the many temples in Rome. The *temple* was the embodiment of beauty, and of sanctity as well. And the apostle said,

"Ye are of the household of God."

And then, in speaking of the building, he cited the temple, because that gave the conception of a glorious structure.

And next he said,

"In whom ye also are builded together for a *habitation* of God through the Spirit."

For the temple then, in his thoughts, was commuted into a dwelling. It was the habitation of God; it was the house; it was the household; it was citizenship.

I do not consider this mixing figures. I consider it a progression of figures, not by any law of outward similarity or suggestion, but by the more subtle evolution of interior thought.

All this refers to the associated life of Christian people, that are become Christ's, that are God's, and that are united together. The apostle does not here so much declare the purposes for which they are united. He rather plays upon the thought of the dignity, the power, and the glory which rested upon men in their religious association. At the earliest period of the history of the Christian church, and even since, Christians drew together for the purposes of mutual support. The Gospel had its first disciples among the poor and ignorant, as we all know; and they really needed to cling to each other. They needed it, not simply for instruction, but preëminently to keep up each other's courage in the life that they were following. For certain exigencies, and during brief periods, it was necessary that there should be a community of goods. It would not have been needful if the earliest followers of Christ had been in circumstances of wealth; but where they were all poor, and where the least change in their condition was liable to throw whole families out of their daily bread, there was reason why they should put their joint-stock at the command of each other. But this never was laid down broadly as a general order of the church. Nor was it perpetuated. It was only an occasional experience. They met, first, in part, for the most economic reasons, but they also associated themselves together because there was no other way of encouraging, helping, and comforting each other in the religious life, so well as on the social principle. It was the social element that first obtained in the Christian church. We have reason to suppose that the Christian church never separated itself from the old Jewish church until after the destruction of Jerusalem. Up to that time the temple was sacred alike to those that were Jews of the strictest sort, and to those that were Christian Jews.

We have almost an exact analogy of this in modern history. When Wesley undertook to reform the Church of England, he did not separate his disciples from the established church; and to the day of his death they did not leave it. They remained in it, and observed its ordinances and rules, at the same time holding separate meetings of their own, over and above those of the church. And the early Christians still adhered to the temple-service, though they had their social gatherings besides, until the city was destroyed, and the temple with it, and they were driven from it. Then they were obliged to frame some other organizations; and they took the synagogue for their pattern, or copied largely from it. And the

circumstances of these organizations varied almost infinitely. There was no prescribed outward form for the church. While they still maintained the established canons and modes of worship of the Jewish church, they met together as Christians aside from the temple-service, because in this way they could kindle in themselves a higher fervor.

It is difficult for single individuals, unless they be very highly endowed, to create in themselves fervor when alone. Now and then there is a nature that can generate its own fire; but ordinarily you must put stick upon stick, and spark to spark, and flame to flame, in order to make fervor. And it is the association of feeling, it is feeling in the multitude, whose thought kindles in each individual the highest forms of emotion. There are very few who have the power of solitary zeal; and there are very few who have not the power of associated zeal. The Christian religion depended at the first, and has ever since depended, and will to the end depend, very largely on worldly conditions. For a religion whose element is love, and not awe; a religion whose very life is sweet and pure emotion, must thrive by the social principle. It never was meant that Christians should be solitary. It never was meant that they should feed themselves. It was meant that they should thrive in their combined and associated capacities.

In church association, also, the feeble and ignorant get from the gifts of all an education which is not possible in any other way. A church that has a real Christian life in it, is one of the best schools to which men can go. If, when the disciples had professed the name of Christ, each one had made his own house the centre, and his own relatives exclusive companions, there would have been hundreds and thousands in the course of time who would have been almost without instruction. But by the gathering together of the humble and lowly with those of culture and refinement in intimate association, the under classes gained, and the upper classes lost nothing. As soon as the idea of brotherhood was once introduced; as soon as men felt that God was their Father, and that Jesus Christ was their elder brother, and that they were all brethren, and they began to come together with that feeling in their hearts, instantly there took place a process of evolution and of education which never can be measured, and which can scarcely be overestimated.

There is an education of the books, and there is an education of the higher forms in schools; but the general education which the community receive depends largely upon the association of men with men. It is the unconscious and general action of the higher natures upon the intermediate or lower, that is perpetually working in

society; therefore, a church that gathers together its members, and has not circulation in it, and has not automatic life in it, and has not the voluntary principle in it, has but little influence; while a church whose members really live, is a powerful moral education to all that belong to it.

It is this that marks the church of the peculiar organization to which we belong. It is a brotherhood. And in one sense—in the sense of rank—all that are in it are equal. There are no priests with us. There are no privileged orders in our church association. We are one family, of which God is the head. The church is itself a household, and all its members are brethren. In that sense they all stand on an equal footing. And of all organizations, this is the best if it is wisely used, while it is the poorest if it is unwisely used.

If there be a true life in the church, if there be a true democratic feeling among the members, if there be a good degree of zeal, if there be a proper familiarity, if there be a sweet and blessed affection, flowing through the church, then the best lives in the church become instructors, and all the poorest lives—the lives of the whole spiritual household—are pervaded by a common public sentiment the gifts of all belong to each; and the gifts of each belong to all.

For general instruction, then, and for the development of emotive life, it is wise for those that love the Lord Jesus Christ to gather themselves together. It is best that they should instruct by more than their ordinary thought—though that ought to be availed of more than it is. There are many churches in which the pew is a thousand times stronger than the pulpit; and it is a very fortunate circumstance that it is so, provided that it is used. But it seems to me that often more than half of the real power of the church is lost because it is not developed and used. Where, as in many of the churches of the adjacent city, there are scores of men of the highest culture, and of the widest experience, who are fitted by their very professional life for speaking and bearing witness to eminent moral truths, it would seem almost impertinent that the only utterances in the church should be from one man—the pastor. Not that I would undervalue the stated preaching of the Gospel; but I would add to the power of church-life the influence of all those who are fitted to bear testimony and witness in the cause of Christ. I do not exaggerate when I say that not half the power which there is in the church is brought to bear as it should be. But where it is brought to bear to any considerable degree, the effect is wonderful. And it is often the case that in what are called *social meetings*, there is a better proclamation of the Gospel, and spiritual truths are more comprehensively set forth, and there is more emotive power manifested,

and there is more profound testimony borne, than can possibly be the case where there is but one man officiating. With all its imperfections, what an extraordinary wealth there is in the pulpit, the world over! Consider what, since the days of the apostles, has been the amount of truth thrown out upon the world—and almost in one direction—by the Christian pulpit. In antiquity there was nothing like it. When you consider that every Sabbath Day hundreds and thousands of places are opened, where men, equipped and skilled by long use for preaching the Gospel, are pouring streams of moral light and truth upon the community, where is there the parallel of this great work? And if besides this immense power, there were brought to bear all the power which inheres in the laity of the church—its membership—there would, I think, be a pentecostal force added, to exalt the spiritual life of the people.

There is in the association of Christians, also, an opportunity for the development of those emotions and those enjoyments which spring from the service of song, such as there could not be if Christians were scattered, and lived solitarily. The nature of religion must be a nature of emotion. For, although religion employs the reason, it bears to it the same relation that a pair of spectacles bears to the eyes. It is not the eyes. It is merely a help to the eyes. And religion is the heart, and not the understanding. Technically, it is reverential, filial love. And religion, although it helps, is but a help. It is not, therefore, theology that is religion. It is the higher form of heart-emotion that constitutes religion.

Now, this can nowhere else have expression so well as in lyrical poetry. There is no other creed that is like the hymn-book. There never can be such a bond of union as the hymn-book. And the songs of the church, and its regular service, often supplement the church, and sustain it through periods of emergency. Sometimes where the pulpit is weak they are strong, and hold the church on in spite of the weakness of the instruction of the pulpit. They give utterance to thoughts that otherwise could never be spoken. Many can chant what they cannot speak. Many and many a one can sing (with tears dropping, and, as it were, beating time) joys or aspirations which no language other could frame. I like to think of love as the center of religion, and of song as its best utterance.

The mother singing over the cradle—is there any other saintliness more beautiful to be thought of than that? The old bird sits on the tree, and coaxes the young bird to fly to her. She sings to it, and teaches it to sing. And the mother sits at the cradle, as it were, to call the little children up to the Christian life. The children sing in the family, and in the utterance of song they are

all one. There is but one sound, but one hymn, and, to a large extent, so far as there is feeling at all, it is one feeling. And persons are never brought into such communion as when they are gathered together, and their feelings express themselves in song. It is the hymns that persons sing together that unite them. I think I love those that I have sung with better than any others. And when we come into heavenly places in Christ Jesus—into the lecture-room and the church proper—and all join in singing, is there any other ministration in the sanctuary that opens the gate of heaven so quickly, and makes the battlements shine so brightly? Is there any other service that so brings to our thought the radiant inhabitants of the other side? Is there any other service that seems to bow and bend the heavens so near to us, and that awakens thoughts of dear ones that have gone away from us so quickly, as songs of Zion? Is there anything which so makes doctrines seem no longer cant, by clothing them with life and beauty; which so makes theology like an orchard, in which stands the tree of life dropping down Christian fruit? Since the church was organized, psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, have been among the peculiar experiences of the church; but I think that we have not fully entered upon those experiences yet. The millennial service of song will put all that we have had in the background. The time will come when whole congregations will chant the Psalms of David, and when they will thus be touched with the profoundest and divinest mysteries, almost as spontaneously as birds warble their Spring songs. The time has not come yet, but the time will come. At present, song is in bondage—sometimes to singing-masters, sometimes to classic music, sometimes to pedantic instruments, sometimes to one thing, and sometimes to another. Just now, it is in danger of going into bondage to taste. We all must have things exquisite. Everything must be carried to the highest pitch of refinement. Nothing will do which has not the signet and sign of the utmost culture. I like culture so long as it is humble, so long as it regards itself as the servant of the truth. But I love the heart; and I would rather hear an old cracked voice, feeble, with many gaps, singing honestly with tears the songs of Zion, than hear the finest cantatrice that ever enraptured the most cultivated congregation. And although there is to be taste and beauty in song, if possible, yet, if anything is to be sacrificed, it is taste and beauty. The inside, the world over, against the outside! The soul against the body! The external goes down to let the internal out.

I would not be understood as undervaluing taste and beauty in song, as you know I do not, by the history of this church, where there has been so much done to promote growth and admirableness

of song; but that is always to be subordinate to the soul. The moment you begin to sing for concert effects, and to feel that nothing will do but the most exquisite style of music, that moment song goes into Babylon. That moment it is in bondage. For it is the minister of joy to the heart. It is the minister of peace. It is that which gives voice to rapture and hope. It is love. It is fellowship. It is triumph in the Lord Jesus Christ. Song is the wing by which we rise higher, with easier beats, than by any other ministration of the sanctuary. And where can you get it as you find it in Christian households? Where can you get it as you find it in Christian assemblies? What has given song to the world more than anything else, is not bacchanalian debauch, is not wild and sparkling gatherings of men for pleasure: it is the soul that sings of immortality. It is the soul that sings of love and gratitude. That has given the world more inspiration of music than all other things put together. And sacred song is yet to rule—as it ought to. And if song is to rule, we must remember that it must be the heart that sings, and not the voice nor taste alone. Taste, voice, everything; but the heart first.

So, too, associated Christian life gives opportunity to help those that need help. If one has the good fortune of education, and of original balance and endowment, and is able to govern himself, he may not need any exterior help; but that is no reason why he should scorn those that do need it. If one is surrounded, in business, and at home, by all the restraints that he needs, that is no reason why he should not associate himself with those who do need other restraints than those which belong to their private spheres in life. And one of the functions of the church is to take care of its members. It does do it to a certain degree; but it is yet in the wilderness. It is imperfectly doing its work; and the ideal church puts to shame the real church. There are a thousand ways in which the church, by stimulation and restraint, holds back men, and helps them to be more religious; and yet it falls short in this respect.

These were some of the reasons that acted to gather the church together; and they are reasons that exist still, and will exist to the end of time. The church is founded, therefore, not upon any external command; and not upon any arbitrary principle of obedience are we to maintain church life. The reasons for it are inherent in human nature. The desirableness of the church does not lie in its sanctions, or in its ordinances, or in its historical elements, but in the life which is developed in it.

Because I resent the oppression of the external church, I would not be understood as not believing in the reality of a true spiritual interior church. Because I say that no man shall impose upon me,

as by divine authority, ordinances that I know are not imperative; because I aver that no man shall presume to say to me, "You are not in the church," when I do not happen to be in the fold which he likes best; because I will not, for one single moment, wink at the despotism of any ecclesiastical organization; because I say that the outside matters pertaining to the church are all of them of human invention, I should be sorry to have any suppose that I deny the existence of the church itself. That is not of human invention. The coming together of those that are rich in the direction of a common love, and their acting under the inspiration of a common spiritual feeling; the coming together of those that are making fight for the same life, under the same banner, and with the same hopes and fears—the coming together of such persons in a real household, is natural in the highest sense of the word. It springs from necessities that are organic in man; that are created in him; that are natural to him.

It is not because the word went out eighteen hundred years ago, *Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together*, that I desire to be united with others in Christian life. It is because my heart calls out for other hearts that are congenial to it. It is because every one who has learned to love Christ truly, loves his brother, and longs for fellowship with his brother. I see in myself, and in you; I see in that which is the best part of me, and the best part of you; I see in our joy, in our faith, in our holy sympathy one with another; I see in our common labors among man—I see in all these things, the foundations of church-life. And I believe in the church, not because the apostles started it, but because God made men so that they cannot live in any other way than in fellowship. That is a foundation that is deeper than any other; and it is a foundation on which the church exerts a more potent influence than it could if it were on any other foundation.

I do not set myself against ecclesiastical establishments for those that want them. If a man wants to go into the Episcopal Church, and wants to observe days, forms and ceremonies, and wants to adopt its whole ritual, I have no objection. I respect that church. I have a thousand reasons for doing so. And though I do not need it myself, I would not say a word, nor make a gesture, to offend any one to whom it is sacred. It is only when the stately bishop comes to the door of that church and says, "We are the people, and wisdom shall die with us—pass on, outsider," that I have any fault to find. But then I raise my protest; and I say to him, "I respect your liberty to worship Christ in your own way, but you never had delegated to you the power to cast me out. It was God, and not

you, that called me ; and God keeps me ; and I am his disciple just as much as you are. And where two or three of us are gathered together, there is Christ in the midst of us—and I do not care if there is not a bishop, if Christ will come."

I do not undertake to say that you shall not have orders in the ministry, if you want them. You may have a deacon ; you may have a priest ; you may have a bishop ; you may have a cardinal ; you may have a pope. I accord that liberty to all. If they choose to orgamize themselves so, I have nothing to say. It is not that men do it for themselves that I complain of, but that they arrogate superiority over every body else, and over everything else, and that they profess to have the kingdom of God, and the whole of it in themselves ; nay, that they claim to have certain golden channels that run clear back to the river of life, and that there is not a drop issuing out from under the throne of God that does not run through their channels. It is when men make these extravagant pretensions, and set up these preposterous claims, in regard to the external church—the poorest part of the Church (for much of it is nothing but bark, and not living bark at that)—it is then that I set myself against it, and declare the liberty of the spirit as against the bondage of forms.

Men sometimes think that I disown baptism. I do not. I put it on the divine ground. I use it, not because it is commanded, but because of the value which I see in it. I use it, not because of any authority which makes it binding, but because I think that it is a help to men in their religious life.

I say that the Lord's Supper is not obligatory in the same sense that the High Church people think it is. The principle on which I use it is deeper and stronger than that which they urge. I use it because there is a living principle in human nature which demands it. The crying out of the soul for it is more than the imposition of it by a stiff and hard law.

Men say, " We must have something fixed." You have something fixed. God is fixed. The soul is fixed. Its strifes upward are fixed. These things are more fixed than any dogmas or ordinances of the church can be. Men seem to think that we are all at sea and afloat , but there is no such stability as belongs to life itself. I put the soul-life against the external bodily life. I put the interior spirit against these externalities. I oppose myself to the bishop only when he is arrogant and encroaches upon my liberty. I set myself against the pope only when he attempts to be *my* pope. I do not want him. I am pope enough for myself ! I set myself against neither bishop nor pope, when they are my brethren. I can

take the bread from that dearly beloved man, Bishop Huntington, or from that venerable and excellent man, Bishop Potter, with the utmost delight—nay, with reverence.

Do I see men that have spent themselves for Christ, and do not you suppose that I know their worth, and love them? I love to look up to people. I wish there were more that I could look up to! I have no repugnance in that direction. It is only when men assume authority that I draw back from them. There is the point. We are all Christlike, in my view, if we love each other. If you are my brother, love me. If you are my brother, we are knit together. I will follow as long as it is love that leads; but the moment that any man begins to be the monarch, giving law with authority, that moment, with all the allegiance which I bear to Christ, I defy him, saying, "I am a Christian man, and a man in Christ Jesus is free."

And yet, the imagination of men has been stained through and through with these claims. I do not wonder at it. But we will get it out of the world before long. There is the notion, that to be of any account a thing must have a certain straight, rigid order, a certain succession. Well, is it so? Is it not true that the dearest, the most influential, and the most permanent things are those which have no such fixity and necessity of external order?

Here is a group gathered together in the family; but they never heard father nor mother say, "My son, have you ever considered that it was your duty to fall in love? I enjoin you, by all the principles of fidelity, to go somewhere and fall in love with somebody." Does not the spontaneous need of the heart take care of that, without any parental exhortation? When two natures are fitted to each other (though they are not always so well fitted) does not the nature in them interpret all that is necessary? Not even language is needful. The ten thousandth part of a look speaks louder than trumpets. And when the life of true love kindles, do they need to say to each other, "Now we ought to go before a magistrate and tell him it is begun?" Do we need such external relationships in matters of this kind? Does not the heart brood? Are not silence and secretiveness a part of the original nature of a delicate and true beginning of love? And, at last, the promise and the pledge are interchanged and fulfilled, and the household is founded, and the life thrives, and burdens are all winged, moving so easily that even sorrows begin to have shining plumes about their neck; then all the life is singing through the household, though there is poverty, it is blessed poverty, and there are content and joy with it. And as, little by little, the population of the household increases, and the father grows proud, and the mother grows justly proud, is there

any other pride so noble as theirs? Is there any pride to be compared with that of loving parents, in each other and in their children? Is there any other gratitude so deep as that of parents' hearts which they give for healthy and virtuous children, and children that are brought up, at last, safe? If there is anything else so deep as that, I do not know what it is.

Well, life flows on. The hair of the parents is turning gray. There have been some little imperfections; there have been here and there cloudy days of experience; yet in the main the life has gone through happily. The children have settled down in spheres of usefulness. And at last they follow the mother to the grave. And as they return to their house they are met at the door by one who draws a contrast between their condition and his. "I live," he says, "in a house that has been in our family three hundred years. You have been living in a house that has no antiquity, nothing to it. I am the son of Timothy, and he was the son of Jacob, and he was the son of Peter; and I can trace my lineage back to the flood. And my wife is of that other old family; and you can trace her relationship all the way up. And we have lived in the greatest consideration of all the historic circumstances of our descent. We have had everything in our house fixed and right." Do you not suppose that the close sympathy and loving heart-life of the humbler family is worth all the pomp and circumstance of mere antiquity of family?

Now, far be it from me to say that if a man has love and virtue, and the power of joy, it is not a good thing for him to have, also, honorable connections, running away back on the father's and mother's side. And far be it from me to say that where one is cultured, and has the facility for enjoying such things, it is not a good thing to have a mansion, in a park, with all delightful circumstances. If you can have them both, it is better than to have either alone; but if you are going to separate them, which is regent, which is to take the precedence, heart-life without external circumstances, or external circumstances without heart-life?

Now, I hold that in church-life men may justly feel proud if they can trace back their church-forms. I should be very glad to trace church-forms back to the apostles just as we have them here in Plymouth Church; and I think that by exercising a little ingenuity I could trace back a great many things a good ways. I think we have almost everything the apostles had. In the apostolic church they had men that were not worthy of the name of Christ, and so have we in our church. They had men that were stingy, and so have we. They had many ignorant people, and so have we. They had fault-finders, and so have we. We have many of the apostolic seals. I see it

as plainly as can be, though I am not, perhaps, as proud of it as I might be.

The peculiarity of tracing back the congregational church, is that it has no form. It is the gathering together, without external form (or with as little external form as possible) of those that are brought, by elective affinity, into association with each other, in one place, where they worship together in one way. And I have no objection to any Episcopal communion tracing itself back as far as England. There is no harm in taking an old house to pieces and building a new house out of the materials of the old. And if our Episcopal Church is formed from the elements of the Church of England, it is no worse for that. And it would be a matter of some antiquarian pleasure to trace it back to England, and, similarly, for the Church of England to find its source in the older Roman hierarchy. I do not object to persons having a love for such things. All I say is, that they are incidental and collateral.

I like to see swallows build nests under the roof of my house in the country—and they do; but if there were not a swallow on the premises, my home would be about the same interiorly as it is now.

I like to see the clematis climb about the doors of my house—and it does. I like to plant vines and bushes about my dwelling. They make it sweeter and more delightful. I never open my window in summer, that a hundred flowers do not send in their airy thanks to me. But give me my inside life; give me my companions in the household, and if there were not a flower on all the lawn, nor a vine on all the building, it would be home to me still.

I am not iconoclastic. I do not set my face against any sect. I do not complain of the Quaker for his barrenness, nor of the Episcopalian for his floridness, nor of the Presbyterian for his rigidity and authority. I stand and say: "I accord the utmost liberty to you, but you shall not attempt to compress me into your forms. I will be free; and I affirm that my freedom is as legitimate as yours." If there is a way in which you are satisfied that you thrive best, thrive in that way; and as this is the way in which we thrive best we will thrive in this way. But you shall not say that I ignore the church, or destroy the foundations of church life, because I say that the foundations of the church are in the heart, and not outside, in buildings, or ordinances, or government, or theological dogmas.

The reasons, then, why I call men into church association, are reasons that are far more powerful, I think, than those which operate in the hierarchial churches, if I may call them so. But to say to a man, "You shall join the church because it is the command of the Lord Jesus Christ, is presenting the idea of authority in the most

barren, and to me the most offensive way. The command of Christ I find in *you*, and not in history. I can find no explicit command of this kind in the whole of the four Gospels. I can find in the apostolic writings an implication of already existing principles of association; I can find incidental allusions to gatherings of Christians as being already established; but nowhere can I find a specific command to organize a church; nor any command as to how it is to be organized; nor one single hint that there is an external or legal obligation on that subject. Where is the obligation? If anywhere, inside. If not there, nowhere.

Men and brethren, have we come to such a miserable condition that we cannot understand that a thing may be obligatory upon us, though it is not a matter of fixed law? Is there anything known in the statute of the land which requires, when I meet a lady, that I shall take off my hat? And yet, would I meet a lady, if I were in my senses, without paying some respect to her? And is there any law that could make me do it as quick as I would do it without a law?

If you know that your neighbor is sick, do you need a law to tell you to go and minister to his wants? Is there not that in you which makes you feel that it is your duty to do it? Do not the instincts of manhood move you quicker than any human enactment? Laws for those that need laws; but the moment that a man is so quick and sensitive that he follows spiritual necessity and influence promptly and truly, that moment he can do without the law what other people have to do by the law. And when a man does right without being goaded to it, he does it better than he would if he had to be goaded to it. When a man is a law to himself, he stands on a higher plane than when he needs to be restrained by humanly enacted laws. I do not mean that a man is to be a law unto himself in the sense of throwing off external law. The apostle says,

"Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty as an occasion to the flesh."

You are called to liberty; but it is a liberty to go higher and not lower. It is a liberty to enjoy the blessings of a higher life, and not a license to enter upon all sorts of indulgences.

The ground, then, on which I ask persons to join the church, is primarily this: that they are to be united to the Lord Jesus Christ. I appeal to the highest form of reason, and to the highest form of moral sense, and ask, Is there any man that lives who can possibly, for one single moment, standing out of the bewilderment of controversy, deny that he is under obligation to be faithful, if not to any other creature in the universe, at least to Him that loved him, and

gave himself for him? I say that the dearest name on earth, to you, ought to be the name that your father loved, the name that your mother worshipped, and the name that filled your childhood with wholesome awe and reverence. And because it is unnatural for you not to be united in faith, and hope, and love, and obedience, to your God, I call upon every man to enter upon a Christian life—that is, upon a personal union with Christ. I call upon you to open your soul so that the divine influence shall find entrance to you, and give you inspiration, and a spiritual perception of what is seemly, and just, and of good report. I call upon every man to enter upon a Christian life from the highest considerations—those of fidelity; those of fealty; those of love and gratitude to God.

And when you have begun to live a Christian life, your soul will tell you why you ought to come into church association. You will find Christian life easier then. You will find sympathy. And others who have had doubts will be helped by your experience. Oftentimes the experience of one man clears the path of another man.

I call you into church fellowship, then, not because there is an external law that says you must go into the church, but because in church-fellowship you will live happier, more easily, and upon a higher level; because the public sentiment that surrounds you will be a mighty tide that will buoy you up. I call you to church-fellowship for reasons that inhere in your own experience, and in your own profit. Do you love Christ? Then you should love Christ's children. Do you love your father and mother? and do you hate your brother and sister?

"Well but," says one, "I do not feel that I am worthy." If you mean by that that you are conscious that you are living in the commission, secretly or openly, of practices that are disallowed by morality, and that are abhorrent to religion, then my reply to your objection is, Forsake evil, and learn to do well, and still press forward in a Christian life, and with the Christian church. But if you mean that you have not attained to that condition of spiritual excellence of which you have a conception, my reply is, that you are like a school-boy who hangs about the school-house door, saying, "I am afraid to go in. I do not think I know enough to go to school." What is a school for? Is it for knowing boys, or for ignorant boys?

The church is a curative institution. It is an educating institution. Like every household, it has something of everything in it. And because you are not worthy is one reason why you should be in the church.

"O well," many say, "I fear that I shall not be able to maintain all the duties and obligations that rest on a Christian." There is not

a duty nor an obligation that rests on a Christian, that does not rest on you. There is not a single duty that will be incumbent upon you when you go into the church, that is not incumbent upon you now. Is there any obligation greater than this: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself?* And does that rest on you when you go into the church any more than it did before? From the day that you were born, almost; from the time that you were old enough to discern your right hand from your left, that obligation has rested upon you. And that is the great obligation, transcending all others, which will rest upon you when you go into the church. It rests upon you whether you are in the church or out of it.

It is a shame for you to be a sinning man; it is a shame for you to be an un-God-fearing man; it is a shame for you to fritter away your time; it is a shame for you to refuse allegiance to God. You treat him with dishonor. You treat him as you would not treat your neighbor. You would be ashamed to do by a fellow-man what you are not ashamed to do by your God. And I appeal to you, by all that is honorable and all that is right-minded in you, to begin a higher life, and to begin it in association with others that are attempting to do the same thing.

If *you* think you will fail, *I* think you will fail. I never knew a man that did not fail. Yet the motto is, "Cast down but not destroyed." If you stumble and fall, get up again. You are like men journeying, part of the time through a morass, and part of the time up rugged hills, and part of the time in thickets that tear them. And it is not for you to insist that you will not walk a Christian life unless you can be in the king's highway, and unless you can keep yourself intact. And I call you into the church that you may be more profited in it than you can be out of it. I call you to a church life because you need it.

Do you say, "I have all the restraints that I need"; or, "I do not need this inspiration"? Do you say, "My house is better than any other place. I can sit at home on Sunday; I can read sermons; I can look out on the bay; I can wander in the forests; I can make a better use of my time than by going to that miserable little village church, and hearing a humdrum sermon which does not do me any good"? That is the way you have begun to live a life of love, is it?

Here is a man who has an income of fifty thousand dollars; and he is living in a village where there is not a man who gets more than a dollar a day. There is trouble and poverty and sickness all about him; but he stays at home and says, "I find more comfort

in my house than in going to these squalid cottages. I have to go and take supper with these poor people, and mumble their miserable crusts; and I do not like it."

What do you think of that for a benevolent man, who stays at home because it is pleasanter there? He is so favored and fortunate that he thinks it his duty to be selfish! There is many a man who is so dainty that he says, "I am not going to mix with common church-people." There is fellowship for you! You are so well cultured, you are so far developed in the spiritual life, that you are able to minister to yourself; and so you say, "I am not going into fellowship with those that are below me." There are thousands of men who need what you can give them—your example and your sympathy. They need to be made to feel that men who are higher in life than they, do not feel above them. But if men like you were obedient to the Scripture injunction, *Condescend to men of low estate*, their fellow-men all through the community would be greatly comforted, and lifted far up toward heaven. If you know you can get along yourself, do not forget that there are others who need much assistance in getting along.

If you were a prince, and were riding in a gilded carriage, and you saw a peasant's brat suffering by the road-side, it would be becoming in you to stop and take the miserable creature in, and let it ride; and if the mother were there faint and weary, it would be becoming in you to take her in also. It might soil your coach, and it might disgust your servants; but was ever a kingly coach put to a better use than that of carrying God's poor? If you are as much better as you think, humility would make you better yet; and sympathy would make you still better. And you who do not think that you need the church, remember that there are dying men who need you.

Besides, there is another thing. I do not think one ought to sail under false colors. You are a moral man, and a kind man; and wherever you are known in all your neighborhood, the impression is that you will not go into the church. And men, comparing you with persons in the church who are not as good as you are, come to think that morality makes better men than the church does. So you are bearing false witness. They say, "There is a man who has not religion," and yet, you secretly have religion. For you go to the same throne of grace that I do. You read from the same Bible that I do. You have the same belief and hope that I have. It is from God that you get the oil which makes your lamp burn; and men do not glorify God, but they glorify you. Pointing to you, and to others, they say, "That man has

morality, and these men have spirituality and are church members, but he lives a more exemplary life than they do." There may be a hundred reasons for this discrepancy which they do not know, and which you do not know. The ignorance of those men, their temptations, and the troubles and trials of their business, may all conspire to make it difficult for them to be consistent Christians. And it ought not to be supposed that their imperfections are the fault of the church or of religion. And I hold that if a man is living by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, he ought somehow and somewhere to let it be known. He ought to confess the source of his insp ration. If you are enabled to resist temptation, and Christ enables you to do it, you ought to confess it before the world somehow or other. If you are living a noble and pure life, and it is Christ that enables you to live such a life, you ought to acknowledge it among men. If heaven is the source from which you are deriving your life and strength, oh ! let men know where you get medicine, and where you dig gold, that they, too, may have the same recourse. Do not bear false witness. Do not leave men to think that you owe to morality what you are secretly receiving from God.

I shaped this sermon for two reasons : partly because, having had occasion, in some sermons lately, to speak of the bondage of externalities at the expense of the interior life, I do not want to have it thought that I undervalue church-life and church-fellowship ; and partly because there are many in this congregation who ought to make a public profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There are many of you who are living lives of prayer ; there are many of you who are redeemed from death by the power of faith ; there are many of you who only need to take the step of entering upon a declared Christian life. And I feel that the time has come for you to do it. Many of you ought to say to your children, "I am a Christian man." There are many of you whose children need to hear you say it. There are many of you that have neighbors who would be greatly edified and strengthened if you were to array yourself with God's people. If you were to take that step, you do not know how many you would draw after you. If a river-boom breaks away, trunk after trunk, branch after branch, refuse of every description, that has been collecting for weeks, and months, and perhaps years—the whole raft goes after it. And there are men who stand like a boom in the community. One man backs up against another, and there they remain until the obstruction is removed. And there are men in this congregation who, if they would honestly and openly avouch the name of Jesus Christ, and publicly

bear witness to their faith in him, by uniting with the brethren here, would bring in scores and scores with them.

The first Sabbath in May is coming. It is always a Sabbath celebrated as memorable among us; it is a flower-day There is not another Sunday of the year that is such a Sunday of ingathering as that. It is very precious to many families. Some of you have saints in heaven that come into this church on the first Sunday of May; the memory is sweet to you; and you would like to have all your other children come in on that Sunday, because it brings the living and the departed so nearly together. It is a beautiful and crystaline day in this church. It is going, this year, to be a crowded Sabbath; and many of you ought to come in. Your objections are not worthy of longer delay. It seems to me that your impulses, so long suppressed, ought to bear you forward, that your sense of duty ought to be fulfilled, that you ought to join your strength to the strength of your brethren, and in the presence of them all avouch the Lord Jehovah to be your God, and Jesus Christ to be your Saviour, and the Holy Spirit to be your Sanctifier.

The time is short. We are admonished by one and another that are taken. One peg after another, and one cord after another, of the tent, is snapped, or is drawn out of the sand, and very soon this tabernacle shall be taken down, and we shall all give place to others. Another generation is crowding us; and what you do you must do quickly. If among you there are any who have neglected their opportunities for many years, let them bear in mind that if they serve Christ, they must begin at once for they have but a little time left.

Fathers, for your children's sake, for your own sake, and for Christ's sake, I pray you, come into the fellowship of Christ and the brotherhood. Mothers, of all in the world, ought not to set such an example to their children as will shipwreck them. I pray you, bring the sweet offering of a grateful and regenerate heart, and lay it on the altar of the Lord. Young men, maidens, all that hope for salvation through Jesus Christ, for a victorious death and a triumphant resurrection, I invoke you to gather yourselves together into the fellowship of love, into the brotherhood of saints, into the household of God.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Thou that dost guide our thoughts, and inspire our feelings, grant unto us now that inward light and inspiration by which we shall pray for the things which we need, as we ought. We thank thee that we are supplied; that from thine open hand our outward life is maintained; that we are given sufficient strength and skill to maintain from day to day all our outward relations, and to supply our wants. We thank thee that thou hast put within the reach of our own powers the fruit of affection, and that we gather from all the amenities and associations of the household the blessings of love. We rejoice that there is something better than food for the body, or even for the ordinary affections, and that we may rise together into a realm yet higher, to meet thee, to find ourselves the citizens of a better country, members of a nobler household—even the household of God.

Oh! how little do we know of this upper life and realm! How little do we know of the things that are within our reach! How little do we know of the things which are beyond our ordinary grasp! It is thy Spirit that maketh intercession through us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

We pray for the mediation and the help of the divine Spirit in us, so that we may not only ask the things which we consciously need, but may learn to ask the unknown things which we need more than the known. We pray that thou wilt grant unto us intimacy, fellowship, life, day by day—life hidden in thine, that all the sources of our life may be in God, in whom we live and have our being. We pray for the forgiveness of our sins. We pray for a heart set free from a life of sin. We pray that we may have evidence in us that by thy blessed help we are from day to day overcoming easily besetting sins; that we are strong against evil; that we are powerful to resist temptation, and to subdue it.

And we beseech of thee, O Lord! that thou wilt grant unto us more and more to grow into the image of God; that we may find in ourselves the likeness of our Father more and more clearly coming out. We pray that we may be strengthened in all that is good, and that goodness in us may take on higher and higher forms from day to day. And as the time is drawing near when we must lay aside these mortal bodies; as all things which minister to them are growing less and less of account to us, grant that we may have evidence that we have a life with God, and that we are preparing for the fellowship of the higher life in heaven. More and more may invisible treasure begin to have value with us. More and more may we live by faith. May we be blessed by hope. May we have a holy fear, looking unto things which are reserved,—unto that rest which remaineth unto the people of God. And while we are not to ask that we may be set free from these mortal bodies, and the duties that are now incumbent upon us, yet may we have a gladness of heart; may we anticipate with holy joy the time when we shall be free from the body, and from its temptations, and from its burdens, and from its sorrows, and from its sufferings, and shall rise and be as the angels of God. We pray that unto this communion, unto these holy hopes and aspirations, all they may be brought who are dear to us. May all our households become households of faith. May all those whom we are associated with in daily business, have in them the beginnings of this higher life. Grant that everywhere we may be able to carry out the fruit of a true piety, in all gentleness, in all humility, in all honor and fidelity, so that men, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father which is in heaven.

We pray for all that are in trouble. Whatever it may be, we commend them to thy succor, and to thy comforting spirit. We pray for all that are

burdened and vexed with worldly things. And we beseech of thee that as their day is, their strength may be also. And may they not be led by temptation, nor by any pressure, out of the straight and narrow way.

We pray for all those who are endeavoring to build up thy cause and thy kingdom. May they have grace given them to do it wisely. And not only grant that they may be able to speak the words of truth, but grant that they may be able, in their daily life and conversation, to bear out the testimony of Christ more perfectly than by word or by doctrine.

We pray for the poor, for the outcast, for the neglected, for the vicious, for the criminal, for all that are in jails and in prisons, for all that are in hospitals, for all that are in asylums, for all that are not gathered, but that wander in the ways of wickedness and license. We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that there may be more and more effort for the ingathering of the wandering sheep. Bring them back to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.

We pray, to-day, that all who are gathered together in thy name may find thee in the midst of them. Fulfill thy most gracious promises to them all. Grant that there may be more and more strength given to feeble Churches. More and more may their wants be supplied by able men, ministering in thy name. Spread abroad the light of truth; spread abroad the hope of the Gospel; spread abroad the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, until all nations shall know thee, and thy name shall be honored in all the earth, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away, and righteousness shall abide forever. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Command thy blessing, our heavenly Father, upon the word spoken. Grant that it may go forth with a sacred leaven from on high, and that it may work in the thoughts and feelings of every one of thy creatures. Sanctify to us the privileges of our earthly estate. We rejoice in thy Church. We rejoice in this great spiritual, invisible, glorious communion with thy saints. We rejoice that from our childhood we knew of it, and felt its power. We thank thee for the preciousness of its associations, and for the preciousness of the experience which we have had in connection with it. Where is there such love as that which we have formed in thy Church? We rejoice in it, and pray that it may carry with it more divine power. And may the earth at last feel its influence, and be filled with thy glory. We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

THE FAITH OF LOVE.

"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."—Jno. xx. 29.

We shall not immediately comment upon this passage, although it is the axis upon which the thoughts of the discourse will turn. We shall come to it in the regular sequence of the history of the events which took place upon the morning of the resurrection. The whole scene which followed the resurrection, and which is sketched in the Gospel, is one not simply of transcendent beauty—one which indicates great dramatic power, without a parallel; but it is one which, the more it be studied, the more familiar we become with it, the more admirable it seems. In what one of the Greek dramas, in what one of Shakespeare's dramas, are there such elements? Where, in dramatic writings, is there such a whirl of all human passions and events, as those that shook tumultuous Jerusalem, the day before, and during the trial of the Saviour? Such a scene, on such a background as the crucifixion, and such a scene following, transcend, inconceivably, the boldest thing that ever was dreamed of. The attempt to represent so tremendous a period as the three days preceding and including the crucifixion of our Saviour, and his resurrection, is without an equal. There have been notions floating in the world of incarnations; but they were mostly monstrous and grotesque, and they were without moral aim or purport largely, for the worst of reasons—passional, degrading, corrupting. But when and where before was there a conception of the paternity of God? When and where before was there a conception of God, out of the fullness of time, at last dawning through the darkness of this world and coming into it, to be a Brother, and a Friend, and a Guide, and a Saviour, and God manifest in the flesh, for the whole race?

That is the phenomenon, and that is the drama, that is to be enacted—how such a being should live; how he should approach the hour of death; how he should deport himself in the trial

(Easter) Sunday Morning, April 9, 1871. Lesson: Isa. LX. Hymns (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 284, 255, 658.

through which he went; how he should come forth from the sepulchre. And in reading this sublime drama of history, one is struck with the unconscious and exquisite skill with which the terrible scenes of which it is made up are relieved.

It was a canon of Greek art, never to represent pain and horror with such prominence as, on the whole, to overcome the sense of pleasure produced by the drama, picture or sculpture. It is a sound rule of art. And although the recorders of these scenes had no ideal of a drama before their mind, and were recording simply a history, if they had been instructed in Athens, they could not more skillfully have brought in the points of light and relief over against what otherwise would have been unredeemed horror.

Such little touches as those which were given after the Saviour had gone forth upon the way—as, for instance, the outburst and tender greeting of the women—not only threw a light on his feelings, but also relieved our feelings, which would otherwise have been wrought to too great a tension. When he is crucified, no details are given. The most shocking details of the crucifixion have been given in history, and have been given in sermons; but the inspired penmen merely speak of the events, and go into no particulars. There is no casting of him down. There is no stretching out of the hands. There is no piercing of the feet with the nails. There is no sound of hammers. There are none of these circumstances which a spurious history has doubtless magnified. The record says, "They crucified him"—that is all. And it is sublime in its nakedness and simplicity, as well as beautiful in the exquisiteness of its art.

Connected with his crucifixion, there has always been a relief to me in the self-possession which was indicated. They put a sponge upon a reed, with vinegar, mixed with myrrh. That is, wine and myrrh were mixed, and used for the purpose of an anæsthetic, to deaden sensibility. It was something that was given as we give chloroform. He tasted it, but would not take it. He smiled it away. He preferred to go through his sufferings in the possession of his unobstructed faculties. That calm superiority in the hour of extreme anguish, always diffused a light and relief over my mind.

And then, there was the scene of that touching conversation between the Saviour and the thief. Who else would have dreamed of such a scene as that? Who would have dared to attempt it? Who that attempted it could ever have accomplished it? And yet, as it stands, it is full of relief, and full of beauty—of beauty where you least would have expected it, in the anguish of crucifixion.

Then, look at the tender farewell which he addressed to his mother. Most simple, most natural, and most unostentatious, was it; and

yet, there it stands, an exquisite flower, blossoming at the foot of the cross.

Look, also, at the self-control, the love and the divinity, with which he breathed a prayer of sympathy and forgiveness on those that were murdering him. Nor is there wanting a certain relief to the tragic nature of the scene, in the groups that surrounded the cross. On the one side was the group of women, whose courage in that hour was a courage of love and sympathy, which rose superior to the zeal and courage of manhood. For the men shrunk away, and held themselves at a safe distance—with one exception: that of the feminine disciple, John. He stood faithful. Over against the women were groups of the Roman soldiers, gambling at the foot of the cross. They had done their work, and while waiting they were dividing the Saviour's garments. They threw dice to see who should have the whole one; and the others they separated. And it is said that they sat down and watched him. Here were these contrasting groups—the women on the one side, and the hoary gamblers on the other, the one watching with tender eyes of love, and the other with hard eyes of cruelty.

And so, while the central Figure is never lost, while we never for one moment waver in our interest in him, all these unconscious and unintended touches relieve the stress of feeling; and we read again, and again, and again, and never are tired of reading, this matchless scene of the crucifixion of Christ.

I suppose the finer our natures become, and the more delicate are the rules of criticism which we bring to bear upon this history of the last hours of God manifest in the flesh, the better it will stand the test of criticism, and the more surely it will come out evidently inspired.

Where else, in any drama, is there an attempt to depict a God coming from the grave as a human suggestion? It is simply audacious. Yet, if you will look at this, you will, I think, be struck with the skill (not purposed skill), with the rare art, in the best and highest use of that term, that is manifested in the conduct of this part of the history. It is not a slight circumstance, in my judgment, that the resurrection of Christ is not painted at all; that there is no attempt made to paint it. The Saviour is presented to us as lying calm as marble. Nor is there a description of the first stirrings or ever he came forth at the angel-touch. There is no depicting of these things. All that we know is that when the morning dawned, and they went into the sepulchre to find him, he was not there.

And it is a beautiful transition to our conception, that angels are introduced into the tomb. The management of spirits has always

been the test of genius; but where can you find such management of spirits as here? Where can you find angelic appearances so fit? Where can you find demeanor so admirable? Where can you find words so noble? For, while angels are represented as singing at the advent of the Saviour, they are represented as sitting silent in the sepulchre. Two, there were; and we may imagine one the angel of Hope, and the other the angel of Memory; as if the angel at the feet were tracing the history of Christ as "a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief," while the angel at the head was looking for the joy that was before him, and into which he was about to enter? Where can you find so fit an appearance of angels? There is no machinery; there is no ostentation; there is no undue prominence given to this feature of the scene. It was just sketched in with a single stroke.

And then, the appearance of the Saviour is not represented so much by describing *him*, as by describing the effect which was produced upon the minds of those who were cognizant of his resurrection.

This is rare art, and it would take the finest skill to carry it out, were it left to skill. We shall not find, in all this history, a single mis-stroke. The most stupenduous thing to be done, is done freely, and strongly, and perfectly; and yet it is done without a mistake. Not a line could be obliterated. There is not one misadjustment. It agrees entirely with all that we know. The more critical we are, the better. All we know of human nature is met, and we are more than pleased—we are surprised—at every step.

Take the picture, for instance, of serenity. I do not know where I get that feeling; but as I read this connected history, it seems to me as though the crucifixion was like one of those summer thunder-storms that we have, in which all the heavens appear to be full of darkness, and conflict, and turmoil. The terrible thunder-cracks that roll through the darkness; the great striving winds that now tug at the trees which groan under their hands, and that now beat on the house; the hissing rain; all the wild commotion of the elements —these fill the soul full of imaginations and strange terrors. And yet, we sleep (I used to, as a child), and wake, and sleep; and when the morning comes, there is not a cloud in the air. It is as if the heavens were one vast bowl, or goblet, filled with the wine of life. And the sun seems steeping the very heavens. Not a leaf moves except when a drop of water falls from it and changes its equipoise. And all the birds sing, and all voices seem jubilant, and all the earth seems refreshed and more beautiful. And so it affects me when I read of the tumult of the crucifixion on Calvary, and the after quiet.

For then, there are the scenes of the garden—the ministration of angels; the sweet surprise of the different groups that came to the sepulchre. It is all tranquil. It is all joyful. Previous to that event there had been tumult, from the time of Christ's appearance on the earth; but when once he has passed the portals of the tomb; when once he has come forth from the sepulchre, it is all serene; it is all sweet. It is as it should be. Now we can see it. The Saviour has risen; and all the signs and tokens of his presence are gladness and radiance and peace.

There is an utter absence, I have said, of any stage effect. The impression which Jesus makes is that of one who is hovering between this life and the life to come. He is of the earth, manifestly; he wears a body; he has the appetites; he eats, he drinks, and he walks; he has flesh and bones, the genuineness of which he expressly told his disciples to ascertain for themselves; and yet there is an air of distance about him. He is not as familiar to us as before his crucifixion. He seems to touch nothing with that same human sense of feeling that he once did. There is a sort of sacredness about him, as though he were on the way up to his spiritual condition. There is a certain ethereality which works strangeness, not expressed by any formal statement, but coming upon us unconsciously from the artless narrative.

He first meets the group of women who are on their way to Jerusalem, and says, "All hail!" Then he meets Mary, who is bewildered in the garden, and brings her to a consciousness of his presence. Next, he overtakes certain disciples walking to Emmaus, and discourses to them in a manner that seems to them very strange —weird, even. Afterward, he makes himself known to them at the breaking of bread in the house, and then disappears. And they, hurrying, rush back to Jerusalem, and there gather the disciples together in a chamber apart, for fear of the Jews, and he is present with them, and makes himself known to them.

Then, there is that strange scene on the shores of the lake of Galilee, where he calls in the fishermen that have returned from their toil, and speaks with them. There is also the mountain scene, where some five hundred gather together and believe on him— "but some doubted."

The account of the ascension is matchless in grandeur and simplicity; and it would have been hazardous for Shakespeare to attempt to depict such a scene. He would have been left far behind.

Look at the fact of the sudden appearance of Christ to his disciples after his crucifixion. There was not one of them who doubted that he had been slain. About that there was no question. In

general, you will find that there was an intense bewilderment, resulting from alternating emotions. Yet, there was no extravagance in the conduct of any of them. There was nothing artificial or strange in their demeanor. If this had been a made-up history, what efforts would men have made to depict the effect produced upon the different temperaments and the different constitutional peculiarities of these disciples! And yet, there is no effort of this kind. There is no artificial limning. We see just what we might have expected to see, and what we ought to have expected to see.

I have alluded to the historic management of the scene in the tomb. I have alluded to the meeting of the disciples with the angels. But see how, at the meeting of the disciples with the Saviour, the different avenues of conviction were opened in them severally. That peculiar experience is described in which there is a violent strife, and an unbelief, by reason of the alternations of joy and of fear. And this is graphically set forth in a few words:

"And they departed quickly from the sepulchre [having heard what the angels said], with fear and great joy; [for they trembled and were amazed. Neither said they anything to any man. They were unconscious of anybody around them, so intense was their inward feeling; for they were afraid,] and did run to bring his disciples word; and as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail."

And in the instant this wild excitement, this tumult of hope and of joy and of fear, culminated in conviction. And they fell down on the ground before him.

"They came and held him by the feet, and worshiped him."

And yet, they were trembling all over, full of awe; and Jesus saw it.

"Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me."

Then see what a beautiful touch there is of human nature, and one that no man ever would have thought of who was making up this history. I mean that little characteristic scene between John and Peter. They heard, you know, some tidings about Christ's disappearance from the sepulchre, and they started and ran to the garden. They had a race; and John beat Peter. John could not disguise his joy: he had to put it in his own narrative that he beat Peter. Now, I do not think anybody making up a history of this event would have put in that circumstance. And yet, I am glad it is in this narrative. On the whole, I am glad that John beat Peter.

"Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple [as John always called himself], and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together [neck and neck, for awhile]; and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And, he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the

napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself."

I never could imagine why there should have been all that particularity of telling where the grave-clothes lay. I never could make it seem that there was any object in it. It was the habit of men, in telling a thing which they had seen, to tell it just as they saw it. If they were making up a history of the event, they would not, perhaps, stop to put in all these little circumstances; but if they were describing the scene as they saw it, they would put them in, and let folks make out of them what they could.

There is another scene in connection with the first appearing of Christ after his resurrection, where there is a remarkable manifestation of grief and of love, which seems to me in many respects the most exquisite scene in literature. It is that which is narrated of Mary in the garden. There is the unbelief of sorrow, and there is the believing of love:

"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalen." "Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain."

Blessed are they who weep, and who in their grief look into the sepulchre, and who are wise and inspired to see angels, even in the tomb.

"And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith to her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away."

Even his death was more precious to her than the life of any other creature.

'Jesus [throwing all the old-time love into his voice] saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and said unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master."

She did not see his hand, nor his side; but ah! that tone—she had heard it before, and it struck the old chord of love; and no music could compare with that. There was just this one breathing of her name, and love knew him, and sprang to life and to joy.

There is another scene, where we see the conflict of fear. It is one that took place after the disciples had walked with the Saviour to Emmaus. They had seen him; and they went back to Jerusalem and revealed their experience to the disciples that were gathered together there. The doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews. So we see them huddled together in

a secret place, in the utmost obscurity, doubtless whispering rather than talking.

"And as they sat at meat, they [these disciples from Emmaus] told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread. And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen; and he saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."

He comforts them, just as a mother comforts an affrighted child, soothing its fear, and bringing it to the object which it dreads, and making it look at it and handle it.

"Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord."

Of course they were. What simplicity to put that in! and yet, how beautiful it is, being put in!

"And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?"

First, they would not believe from fear; and yet they did believe. They believed, and yet they could not believe, because it was so joyful.

Have you never had this experience yourself? Have you never said, "This is too good to be true"? Have you never been so happy that you pinched yourself to see whether you were not asleep? Have you never wished to test the reality of what you believed?

How continually has it struck me, and how it strikes me yet, what simplicity of instruments and means there is in this narrative, and how little expenditure there is of machinery! Indeed, there is no machinery in it. It is desultory, almost. It certainly is unstudied and unconscious.

There is one more instance which is of interest in connection with this event—that which relates to Thomas, with a portion of whose history I opened this discourse. After this scene of the disciples in the secret room in Jerusalem, where it is said that Thomas was not present, other disciples said unto him, "We have seen the Lord." No man can tell the exultation which must have gone with the utterance of that simple declaration, "We have seen the Lord."

Now, Thomas was a man of reason; he was a philosopher. He had no objection whatever to believing; but he wanted proof; and he wanted the proof to be of a particular kind. And when all the disciples were aglow, he was unmoved. He knew them; he knew their nature; he knew their veracity; he could not but have known that their testimony was sufficient, at least, to create a joyful presumption. But with a sort of conceit and loftiness, as much as to say, "They may be imposed upon, but I cannot be," he said,

"Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."

It is as if he had said, "I must be present when I am convinced; and it must be according to my mind and my nature, and not by sympathy, that the evidence shall come."

"And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you."

How singularly full of peace Christ was, both in the last hours preceding his crucifixion, and afterward, every time that he met his disciples!

"Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing."

"It was too much for poor Thomas. He cried out,

"My Lord and my God!"

Well, Thomas was a good fellow, after all. He did not mean any harm. He had a heart in him. He only had a touch of vanity. He was not going to believe because others did. Jesus came to him with that sweetness, and tenderness, and beautifulness: and the moment he saw Jesus, he could not resist another instant, and he cried out,

"My Lord and my God."

Thank Thomas for that.

"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen me, and yet have believed."

This is not a rebuke of the desire to have physical evidence of physical facts, at all; nor is it a rebuke of Thomas for desiring to identify the Saviour past all mistake; but it seems to me that there was an inward feeling which inspired that rebuke of Christ. It is as if he had said, "After living so many years with me; after experiencing the intimacy and the enduring love that you have; after knowing all that you have known, was there nothing in your hope, was there nothing in your love, was there nothing in the probabilities of the history of my bearing toward the other disciples, was there nothing in you that was touched by their testimony?" It was a reproach to the love of Thomas. Christ as much as said, "If ye had loved me, Thomas, as I have loved you, you would have needed no other evidence. The intuition of love would have made you sure, when you heard one and another and another bear testimony that I, your Lord and Master, had risen."

The scene, looked at in this light, is inexpressibly beautiful to me. I am touched by this appeal of the Saviour for belief to the deepest part of our nature, and not to the eyes nor the hands. Though these are proper instruments to be employed in ascertain-

ing the truth, yet, as between friends, the heart ought to interpret. As between friends, testimony ought to be received, and cold proofs of a physical nature ought not to be insisted upon.

Time would fail me to go into all the details of this matchless part of the history, covering the first few days after the resurrection of Christ; but I ask you whether, if you look at it closely, you can conceive of anything more transcendent? Can you conceive of the revelation of a risen Christ to his disciples, under circumstances more fit, and in ways that would touch more perfectly your sense of poetry, your sense of affection, your sense of dignity, or your sense of fidelity to duty? Is it not rare in limning, and exquisite in coloring; and chiefly, is it not striking for simplicity? And how much of effect is brought out with how little effort! For, one might read over all this history of the few days after the resurrection of Christ, in certain moods, and be little affected by it; one might go through the whole of it, in an external state, and not have a single point strike him; but the moment that a man comes into a state of real susceptibility, the moment that his higher feelings are developed, it is full of meaning, and its contents are not less than marvelous to him.

Well, then, is this a fictitious history? Is it a myth? One of the recent theories by which the authenticity of the Gospels is sought to be done away with, is that there were certain occurrences, that these occurrences were magnified in the eyes of the people, that they were recorded thus magnified, and that they were handed down to a later period as real facts of history; whereas, they were only a bundle of myths. But where before was there ever a mythical history that so far outran the best things which philosophy or art could do? Where before was there ever a history born, as it is said, by the brooding of superstition or ignorance among the common people, which was able to unfold such a transcendent vision of the Divine Being, under circumstances so critical, and where, to follow nature, would so mark the highest efforts of genius, if it were the work of genius alone?

But if this be simply the recital of facts, then what must those facts have been? If the narrative, in its almost ragged artlessness, with the various elements thrown together without any attempt to produce a scenic or tragic effect is so transcendently beautiful, what must the scenes themselves have been! And what an unanswerable argument is here, to those that can appreciate it, of the authenticity of this part of the history of our Lord and Saviour!

Now, for ourselves, there is, in the first place, the historical argument for Christ, which is good, and to be studied. It is neither

to be undervalued nor to be made too much of. It is the appeal of exterior facts to the interior reason. It is the same argument with which we ply the documents that remain of the history of Rome, or of the history of Greece, or of the history of the Oriental Empire. All the Gospels submit themselves to the same historic tests. Nor ought we to fear. For there is that in these narratives which will defy destruction. So much that is beautiful, so much that yet transcends our power to conceive by the imagination, so much that is in the highest degree superhuman, is there, that it is incredible, utterly, that it should not have happened. Historic tests and processes brought to bear upon the text of the New Testament may for a time cloud it, may for a time disturb the regularity of men's belief in it, but in the end they cannot but confirm this history of a supernatural event.

I would not, then, undervalue your reading of historical arguments for proof of the reality of Christ's life, and of the events connected with it, and recorded of it; but there is to be found here evidence of the divinity of Christ without this external historical argument. There is that to which the Saviour himself alludes, in his appeal to Thomas, to whom he said, as it were, "You believe because you have seen me. You have had sensuous evidence [the equivalent of historical evidence]; you have believed according to ordinary rules of belief, by which men judge of lower truths—truths of fact, and truths of science. Blessed are they that believe, not having seen. Blessed are they that have had such a recognition of the divine element, that they believed, not simply by physical or historical proof, but by their own moral intuition and inward perception." The evidence which rises above all others, is that of personal experience. The highest faculties are concerned in it—and in their holiest hours. It is the testimony of our very best manhood in its ripest conditions. Not when we are turmoiled in the world, not when pride is striving, not when our lower nature is in the ascendancy, do we ever show sensibility to evidence in respect to the divinity of Christ. It is impossible, in a war of words, in a conflict of arguments, in the jealousies and hatreds which come up between men, to reach the highest evidence of Christ's divinity. But when once life has, as it were, not for fear of the Jews, but for fear of evil, shrunk back into a room by itself; when we are gathered, as the disciples were, where Christ is accustomed to meet us—then it is that he comes and says personally to us, "Peace be unto you." It is in those hours when we have the advantage of our best nature in the best circumstances, that Christ manifests himself to us. That is the time when the best part of our nature rises up,

and pleads that it may be true that Christ is a reality, and that all the aspirations and yearnings of the soul, and all its joys in anticipation, may not be as a baseless vision.

This is a true evidence. Though it is as possible to pervert it as any other evidence; though a heated imagination may suppose itself to know in whom it has trusted, and be mistaken; yet all things of this kind do not work any diminution in the force of the reality. Where one is in the upper moods, in the deepest moods, in the best moods; where the soul is most aroused in its noblest parts; where Christ appears to us, and says individually to us, "Peace be unto you;" or where he speaks other words of love, and all things respond to the divine touch—there is evidence which no man can gainsay, who wishes to know himself. It may not be evidence to you that another believes it, but that should be the best evidence to you which you have in yourself.

The highest evidence of Christ and his divinity can only be given to one person at a time. It is gathered out of each person's own heart-life and heart-experience. I think I may say fearlessly and joyfully that hundreds and thousands—hundreds within the scope of your knowledge—have lived with this inward testimony of a risen Christ in their own moral experience, and have lived above the world, you being witnesses. You know that that noble woman, your mother, lived by the sight of something which you did not see. There was a vision to her. You remember it. What strange serenity she manifested in darkness and trouble! What wondrous sweetness of patience she exhibited under untold exasperations! What singular fidelity was shown by her when all motives to fidelity seemed gone, and every motive to the reverse conduct seemed regent! You remember that mother, that wife, that sister, who seem hanging in your memory almost like sainted spirits, who did not touch the earth so much as to soil the foot. You believe that their life was hid in Christ, and that they lived by a faith that worked by love. And would you dispossess yourself of that belief if you could? Would you take out from yourself the recollection that those who are dearest to you believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as their very God, and lived and died in the strength of that faith? Would you wipe out that fact if you could?

Have you not seen persons that were not nearly connected with you; persons that were in poverty; persons that were in sickness; persons that were in all manner of misfortunes; persons that were in obscurity; persons that were eminent in suffering; persons that walked in the world almost without any of its fruitions and fruits—have you not seen such persons who yet walked victoriously and

songfully? The wretches and the outcasts are often happier than the most favored sons of fortune. It is the harp, or the viol, or the lute, that makes music in mansions of pleasure and saloons of wealth; but, after all, there is no such wondrous spiritual joy as you find in the hut and the hovel; and the dying pauper in the poorhouse may have more music in his soul than the richest son of pleasure has ever known in the resplendent mansions of his wealth.

Such arguments are but poor in statement, I know; but they are great in experience. I do not believe a sensitive, yearning moral nature can stand in the presence of one who knows in whom he has trusted, and who is full of this unconquered and unconquerable faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, and not be himself infected with a holy sympathy with that same faith and that same belief.

Why should men want to cast away this belief? Do men desire to cast off their raiment in winter, when ugly storms howl and rage? Do men wish to break down the door of the protecting house and let all the severity of the weather in? When hunger gnaws, do men, on a voyage, desire to hurl into the sea the food that attracts their appetite? When men are suffering the pangs of sickness, and all the throes of fever are upon them, do they desire to press away the physician's hand that bears the relieving medicine? Men covet these things. And what, in the round earth, is there that a man needs which Jesus has not offered in himself, who comes to us, not to condemn but to save, not to judge us but to love us into purity; who comes to seek and to save the lost; who speaks with matchless wisdom to those that will listen to his voice; who walks with all the grandeur of a God; who, with all the tenderness of a mother's love, goes through the scenes of earthly suffering; who, more and more marvelous to the very good, dawns again from the grave, brighter than a morning star, and sheds the beams of peace around about him; who fills all his disciples with overpowering joy; and who goes among men blessing those that believe in him though they have not seen him, relieving sickness, redeeming men from the power of misfortune, lifting them above temptation, crowning them with a holy courage, helping them to live lives of faith, and enabling them in their last hours to rejoice, the heart singing while the body perishes—the inward man being renewed while the outward man is decaying?

Who does not desire such a faith, such a holy strength, such nourishment of all that is best in him? Let them seek to hew down this shadowy truth of life who will; as for me, I stand under the branches of that holy hope of the Son of God, my Lord and my Saviour. If this be idolatry, I will face the universe with my Idol,

and will perish, if need be, in the proclamation of my confidence in Jesus Christ, the Joy and Strength of life.

"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee."

Do not be afraid, then, to trust utterly; and if you waver, if you permit your heart to be discouraged and despondent, if you fall down low, and lower, to mere physical evidence, if you abandon this testimony of the Spirit of God striving with your spirit, this moral sensibility to Jesus Christ, remember that your Master, yet one day, may say to you as he said to Thomas,

"Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

On this very joyful day—a day that I love because it is joyful—let us fill our houses full of gladness. Let us to-day speak to our children of the beauty of Christ and the joyfulness of Christ. Let us banish every ray of darkness. Let us keep out every alternative thought. Let us look up. We are the children of light, on this blessed day. Our Lord is risen; he has ascended; he ever liveth to make intercession for us. Let us keep that bright side, that blossoming beauty and glory of Christ, filling our own hearts and our own habitations, to-day, full of gladness; may we say one to another, "Our Lord is risen." And may it be in our own hearts that he shall have risen—risen never again to go down, but to give us light in life, in death, and in immortality.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Grant unto us, this morning, our heavenly Father, that invitation of the Spirit, that welcome, by which we shall know that we are remembered. We cannot bridge the distance between us and thee, ourselves. Nor have we strength to fly through all the space. We cannot lift ourselves into the conception of thy glory, nor of the estate of the blessed. Condescend unto us, thou that dost seek and save the lost. Come to us, and bring us the suggestion of thy life, of thy love, of thine holy habitation, and of the rest which remaineth for the people of God. Illumine our hearts, to-day, that we may not be discouraged in our pilgrimage; that we may not count the truth, by which we have thus far been sustained, as a cunningly devised fable; that it may not elude our thought, nor escape the grasp of our nature day by day. For we need to have a perpetual resurrection in ourselves of faith and hope and love. And we rejoice to come to thee this morning—the morning that brings to us, tenderly and afresh, the concourse of thoughts and prayers and joys of all thy people throughout the earth. We desire to come to thee this morning, when before our minds rises clearly the thought of thy triumph, of thy blessed resurrection, of thy supreme and serene joy, and of the bewildering fear and gladness and struggle of all thy disciples, who lost thee, and found thee, and knew it not. We desire to come to thee this morning, O, our ascended Saviour! Thou that hast said that thy Father

was our Father, and that thy God was our God; thou that hast bound us unto thee by the ties of love and promise; thou that hast witnessed to us a thousand times, in thought and in feeling; thou that hast twined thyself around about the experiences, most sacred, of our inward life; thou that hast sustained us in outward conflict and in trouble; thou that hast helped us to seek our household, as we do our joy, with the heavenly light; thou that hast sent us stars to shine in the hours of our darkness; thou that hast taught us to love, and all the meaning of loving, and its everlasting course—we draw near to thee to rejoice, and offer thanksgiving; to make known all our gladness, not in words (for no language can speak that which our hearts can experience) but by laying our souls open to thy sight. We draw near to thee, this morning, as our Brother, our Exemplar, our Friend above all friends, our Leader, our Forerunner, our Mediator, our Saviour, our God. And we give to thee all that we can give to any. When we have cast before thee our thought of reverence, and of worship, and of fidelity, and our innermost affection, there is nothing left—nothing stronger, nor purer, nor higher—that we can offer to any other one. It is to thee, and yet to the Father. It is to thee, and yet to the Spirit. We do not understand the mystery of the God-head. We know that when our hearts are lifted up to worship thee, there is no jealousy between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, and that all the little we can do, is accepted with infinite grace. For as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. And thou dost pity our ignorance, and our want of scope in understanding. Though we are entangled in many thoughts, and find the places that are void and that are dark to be vast in comparison with the points of light in true knowledge, we know enough to love; and there is everlasting ground. We love thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, as thou hast taught us to love. We are as branches of the vine. We take from thee our nutriment. We bring forth fruit by reason of that which thou dost give unto us. We are saved by thee, and yet by ourselves also. For thou dost work in us to will and to do of thy good pleasure.

And we beseech of thee, O Lord our God, that thou wilt grant, this morning, that every one in thy presence may have fresh occasion to bless thee. We pray that thou wilt grant that every one, this morning, may be able to consecrate himself afresh in love to Him that loved him even unto death, and has now risen, and is on high a pleading Saviour. Grant, we pray thee, that every one this morning may be able to overcome fear and easily besetting sin, and to lay aside every weight, and renounce every form of sin whatsoever, and to draw near with humble boldness unto thee, to receive thy blessing, and to rejoice in thee.

And may we again, this morning, begin with fresh zeal, with a new and holier hope, with more radiant aspiration, and with a purer faith, to serve thee. We commend ourselves to thee, thou All-seeing Love, by reason of our weakness. Thou knowest it altogether. Better than we know, thou knowest all these things, and all other things that relate to our welfare. And we commend ourselves to thee by reason of our infirmities. Thou knowest them. And we commend ourselves to thee by reason of our sins. Thou knowest transgression. Thou dost perfectly understand where weakness ends, and where transgression begins. Thou seest what things have been treasured up, and what sin upon sin has been committed. We do not attempt to hide ourselves. It is in the searching of thine eye that we have help. We cannot live except under thy forgiveness, and in thy great grace. And we plead, this morning, not what thou hast done, but what thou art. We plead, not thy history upon earth, but thy heart in heaven. We plead, not thine atoning work, but the love which led thee to atone, which ever lives, and which is a living power. We plead God in Christ Jesus, reconciling the world unto himself.

And we beseech of thee that it may not be in our own strength, for one single moment, that we shall fancy that we stand, but altogether in the love and tenderness, in the pity and fidelity, in the great grace, of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour. And who shall harm us if we stand thus encircled by thine arm. Who need fear to live, who need fear to die, who need fear to appear before the judgment seat, that has thy protection? If we are in thee, what can harm us? Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

And we pray that thou wilt quicken those that love thee, to love more. Comfort those who are beginning to experience affection. Though it be little, may it be as the morning star. And we pray that they may have, day by day, renewed and increasing experience of the goodness of Christ to them.

If there are those, this morning, who feel that they have fallen back and enwrapped themselves with carnal and secular influences, and who desire, to-day, to cast off all earthly incumbrances, and renew their consecration, oh! as they stretch out their hands in desire and prayer, hear thou them, and bring them in with great grace and lenity, very near to thyself. And may they hear thee call them by name. And may they honor thee. And may they rejoice in thee with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

And we pray that thou wilt lead to a knowledge of Christ those who are without God and without hope in the world. Why, at this blessed time, irradiated with so much hope and joy, should any be without their portion?

Oh! deliver those that are bound, and those that are ensnared, and those that are out of the way, and bring them again to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. And unite us together, not outwardly, but in the inward and spiritual communion which thou dost grant unto thy children. Encouraged by the same hope, actuated by the same purposes, tried by the same temptations, falling under the dominion of the same sins, and redeemed from their thrall by the same precious love and faithfulness, may we all walk together in unity, more and more united by charity, as we draw near to the golden gate. And by and by, when we shall, one by one, step out from this earthly life, may we hear the sounds of heaven; and may they be as music to us; and may all our darkness disappear; and may the light that shall know no dimness, dawn upon us, and extend from horizon to horizon.

And in thy presence, and in the presence of all those whom we have lost, but shall be found again; with the general assembly, and with the Church of the first-born; with spirits of the just made perfect—in this company of the redeemed, ourselves redeemed, we will give the praise of our salvation to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

SPECIAL DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."—Matt. vi., 33.

What things? They are enumerated in the foregoing context, and may be briefly summed up by saying that all secular necessities and wants will be provided for—food, raiment, shelter—in general, the means of livelihood. It is declared that the true way to gain a comfortable livelihood in this world, is not to seek our lowest wants with our highest feeling, and with our best time, and with greatest anxiety, but to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness first; and that all these other things will be drawn on in the train of that.

In this remarkable passage of our Saviour's teaching there is the clear annunciation of the doctrine of a divine and special providence. There is the declaration of God's personal care for us creatures of the human family—of the whole great family of man.

I. It is not the doctrine, here, that men should imitate birds, or that they should leave themselves, as flowers do, to the ministration of natural law. In other words, the indolence of patient waiting is not inculcated, as it might seem to some, reading hastily, that it was. The economy of this world is such, under the divine government, that the very smallest and the least powerful things are sufficiently cared for and supplied, each in its sphere; each within the reach of the appropriate instruments that are stored up in it.

The worm is organized so that it has in its nature the means of taking care of itself. The higher insects are organized so that they, also, are able to take care of their necessary wants. And the bird is organized so that it takes care of itself by the appropriate use of its own organs. And the very vegetable kingdom is organized in such a way that it feeds, and thrives, and develops, and shoots forth all its beauty.

Now, in that economy by which God has arranged the universe so that each thing in its own sphere is able to take care of itself,

SUNDAY MORNING, April 16, 1871. LESSON: MATT. VI. 19-34. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 73, 193, 668.

and is cared for; in that economy by which the lowest and the least are amply provided for, shall God forget to take care of the highest and the best? That is the argument. It is an appeal to men's observation.

It is not an appeal of this kind: "Do not work, and do not plan; stand still and wait, and you shall be fed. The birds are cared for, and the lilies are cared for, and you shall be cared for." How is the bird cared for? He gets up early in the morning, and goes a-hunting, and looks after seeds and insects. He is cared for so that he has in his own sphere, in himself, the preparation for supplying his wants. How is the lily cared for? It pushes its roots down deeper and deeper, and pushes its stem up further and further, and draws its nourishment from earth and air. In its own blind way it *enterprises*. Such is the structure of the world, such is the divine wisdom manifested in the creation of things, that everything, from sphere to sphere, down to the lowest, is provided with means for self-care. And the Master says, "Are ye not much better than they? And has God forgotten to provide for you? Has he not clothed you with proper power? Has he not given you equal opportunity? Has he not constructed the laws of the universe in such a way that if you put forth your power you will succeed as well as all creatures below you? Are you not as wise as a worm? And shall a worm do better than you? Are you not equal to a bird? And shall a bird surpass you? Are your reason and your skill therein all for nothing?" No. By as much as you are more highly organized, by so much your chances multiply. By as much as the lowest and least thing in creation under God's administration is able to maintain itself in comfort, by so much shall the highest organization in his government be amply able to take care of itself. Therefore do not *fret*. It does not say, nor is it intimated, that you shall not work nor plan. "Take no thought"—that was translated at a time when the word *thought* signified *anxious thought*. Do not therefore be uneasy and disturbed, taking that kind of hot thought which, rolling round and round, burns wherever it touches, and by which men brood over their troubles—over those things that are not troubles, but that they fear will be; for two-thirds of all our suffering and friction in life lies in the imagination—in the things which we create for the morrow and the next day. In the present, everybody is able to stand up and bear what comes to him. It is the things that we anticipate which we cannot bear. And it is against this dread of things in the future that the Saviour utters the words, "Take no thought"—no anxiety, no fret, no worry.

It is a declaration, then, of a providence which has personal su-

pervision, which cares for the least things, and much more cares for the very highest; and which not only cares for them, but has provided means, and will maintain the provision, by which everything in its order and place shall live and be happy.

II. It *does* preclude two things: First, absorption in the lower ends of life; and, second, wear and tear of mind in the performance of worldly functions. We are forbidden to seek first our food and raiment, and our bodily comforts—that is, "first" as being transcendent in importance in our estimation. Secular prosperity ought not to be considered the chief thing for us. We are forbidden to turn all the forces of our natures downward. Inspired of God, continually directed by Providence, we are to seek something better than the perishable. We are not forbidden to seek that: for it must, in one respect, precede everything else in the order of time. That is, a man must eat, or he will not live to be a man. He must be clothed, or winter will overtake him and destroy him. He must have shelter, or the storm will bring with it suffering and disaster and death. So that in the mere matter of time we must first see to it that we have bodily life and bodily health. But first in emphasis, in priority of importance, is not the body or its wants, but that which the body carries. The soul, the character, the manhood—that is first. In seeking all our lower wants we are to do it, not with anxiety.

And here is an incidental testimony of the real spirit of the Gospel, which many have supposed to be a pain-bearing message—a system of religion in which the ascetic principle was wholesome. But according to the teaching of our Lord, we are to steer away from it. We are not to fret ourselves with anxieties. We are not to bear pains if we can legitimately get away from them. The fruit of the Spirit is joy, peace, long-suffering. The fruit of the Spirit is not pain.

III. The declaration of our Saviour here does not seem to imply a simple indiscriminating divine providence in which, or under which, the wise and the unwise, the good and the bad, all are treated alike. It is true that the sun rises on the just and on the unjust; but it does not treat them exactly alike. It is true that the rain falls on the good and on the bad just alike; but it does not do the same thing to both. The rain falls on sand, and leaves sand; and the rain falls on soil, and leaves a large crop behind it. And God's sun rises on industrious men to equip them, and on lazy men to shame them. It sheds its light and warmth upon everything alike; but what it does, depends upon what receives it. And there is a special divine providence which comes to all men; but it does not affect them alike. To those that are working in one way, and in a lower way, it still is

a providence; but they do not make out of it, and it does not make out of them, what a providence does that comes to men who are wise, and wise morally.

The declaration is a twofold one. It is a declaration of a superintending providence, but of a providence coupled on our part with obedience to law.

Our Saviour annunciated in various ways, and by various illustrations, this law of God's provident care and government. If you want to be under this providence, and avail yourselves of it, then seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and so, or then, or thus, all things will be added to you. He does not say to men, "Stand in your places trusting in God, and he will take care of the lame and the lazy." That is man's maxim. The divine maxim is: Stand in the proper sphere, and put all your power in the noblest service, and then, so acting, God's providence will bless you in everything else. It is not an unconditional promise, or an indiscriminating providence that will release men from all care, and all sorrow, and all want. It is the declaration, by implication, of the truths of God's providence, and of the fact that it works with those that aim toward the best things. It is, in other words, identifying providence and natural law. Providence is but another name for natural law. Natural law itself would go out in a minute if it were not for the divine thought that is behind it. All laws would fall imbecile, and would perish, if it were not for the energizing will of the divine mind behind them. Laws are but instruments by which God's purposes are being worked out in the world.

Now, the implication of our Master is this: that those who work for the kingdom of God and his righteousness—that is, as I understand it, those who take their reason and highest moral faculties, and aim with them for the best purposes of life—not only will be sure to succeed in the thing itself, but will draw after it all that lies below or behind. The greater includes the less; so that if a man desires honor, integrity precedes honor; if a man desires wealth, benevolence leads to wealth; if a man desires physical pleasure, virtue is the road to physical pleasure. By the highest we find the gateway to the lowest. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," and all those things which the body wants, or the lower nature wants, shall be added—and in innocuous forms; because they come under the regulating influences of the moral sense and the experienced life.

The sum of the teaching, then, is this: Let every one make his superior moral duties paramount. Then let him not fret concerning his bodily necessities and wants. God's providence is such that the

greater duty will include, when performed in its fruition, all that is subordinate. And upon this foundation I proceed to make some points of application.

1. There is a divine government that regards the welfare of individual men. This is implied in the belief of a God that sustains the order of nature. I suppose no man willfully rejects the belief of a special, present providence, taking care of every particular of our lives. No man, certainly, objects to that on account of its disagreeableness. I apprehend that those who reflectively reject it, do so with regret. It certainly is something which one should wish to believe. It is a thing to be desired. No person, in his hours of conscious weakness, when he realizes the great sphere in which he is acting, and the mighty forces that are wheeling around about him; no man, when he feels his own insignificance, can help yearning, it seems to me, to have it so. A man is baffled when he looks into the future, and sees how poor his perceptions are, and considers how imperfect his business vaticinations are. And he has the feeling that it would be transcendently blessed to be under the care of a God who thinks for us; who takes the thread of our life and spins it out to the long length necessary for our welfare; who takes the blossoms of our life, and fructifies them, and brings them to fruit.

But men say, "It does not stand to reason, and it is not consonant with observation—with what we actually see in life. For we perceive that everything comes by law; and that if a man fulfills law he is blessed, while if he does not fulfill law he is not blessed. Therefore, to preach the doctrine that there is a special providence that interferes with and interrupts law, and makes it something different from what it is, in the stated order of things, destroys the foundation of men's experience and the results of their observation." They say, "It is true that God governs the world by laws; and these laws are constant and immutable; and if men obey they reap the fruit of obedience, while if they disobey, they reap that other fruit. And as to God's substituting in their place a government of favoritism, or a specialty of direct divine volition, there is no evidence of this. All the presumptions are against it."

We do not say that. We do not say or think that the special providence of God is one that supersedes law, or that it impletes it, and makes it what it was not in its plan and economy. We do not say, either, that there is interjected between laws a divine fructifying power. We do not undertake to say what the divine providence is. But we do undertake to say that the Scripture teaches that the divine providence acts *by* law, and *through* law, and not under it nor over it, nor existing by the destruction of it. It is

simply a provision by which they who obey to the measure of their strength in their respective spheres, and take the laws, and hold the closest to them, will find that they are most brought under the benefits of divine providence. There is a sustaining power that blesses obedience.

Look, how men reason on this subject. They say, "Natural laws are all that we know—great natural laws." What do you mean by *great natural laws?* "Well, the natural laws by which the globe coheres; by which it moves; by which the seasons come; natural laws as they are interpreted through chemistry, as they are interpreted in physics; all the laws that are interpreted on the globe." But is that the only thing that the Lord made—this great globe, which is his footstool? Is not man a part of this globe? Is there not more of nature inside of man than there is outside of him? What is there that is worth anything in this world outside of man? Everything else is shucks, husks. Man is the fruit that everything has at last culminated in. All the process of evolution and development, from what theories soever you study it, culminates in man. And if you want to study nature, study *human* nature. Study mankind; and what you find of the divine economy there, is the economy of God's natural law. Not brute matter, not the great law of physical force, is the richest field for investigation; but human nature, with endless variations and combinations.

The divine providence is a providence that conforms to the laws of nature which it has made; and it conforms to the laws of the human family which are its children. What is the law then? Is it that one cannot help another? Is that the result of experience and of philosophy in interpreting the laws of nature? Cannot human nature do anything? Does every person stand still and say—the mother to the babe, and the father to the child, and the school-teacher to the scholar, and the master-artist to the artist-pupil—"I am unable to do anything for you"? Does the world go upon the theory that everything is fixed? Do men say to each other, "There are great natural laws: obey them, and you will be able to take care of yourself. Do not come to me"? Does the master mechanic, when the apprentice comes to him and says, "I want to learn this trade," say, "This trade consists of the application of natural laws: now apply natural laws, and you will learn it. Do it yourself"? Cannot the master help the apprentice? Cannot one man teach another how to make a barrel, or a hat, or a house, or a ship, or a picture, or a statue? Is it so that you cannot use natural laws? Is it so that we are walking powerless in the midst of these great agencies of matter, and that no man can make any variation in his life and experience? Does not the history of

the race show that men have the power of using natural laws—some so that they die in the poorhouse, and others so that they die in a home—some alone amid the squalor of vice, and others amidst angels from above and from below, angels of the family and angels of heaven? Is there not evidence on every hand that they who use natural laws in right ways will be blessed thereby? Is it not demonstrated to us continually, that there is a system of natural laws which adapts itself to your nature and my nature; to your will and my will; to your reason and my reason; to your power of combination and my power of combination? All the heaven and all the earth are a part of the one great natural law. And the experience of human life is this: that it makes all the difference in the world whether natural laws are used by rational, intelligent beings, free to choose or to refuse, or whether they are not used at all.

More than that, because I cannot make one hair of my child white or black, because I cannot, by crying or teaching, add one cubit to his stature, cannot I make any difference in the fate of that child? Does not my example and experience change his circumstances? and cannot I guide him? Steering amidst natural laws on every side, does it make no difference what I do to my children? While I do not destroy natural law, I stand by them, and first train them, and afterwards advise them, and then influence them; and it is my vitality that makes natural laws in the case of my children minister to their prosperity all the way down. And yet, with this in every household, with this in every store, with this in every shop, with this on every ship, with this in every phase of national life, men are standing up, white-faced, apparently without a drop of blood in their veins, or a particle of sympathy with actual life in their souls, saying, "Oh! first find out natural laws, and obey them. That is the best way. You can get at nothing else!" With this picture; with life for a perpetual parable; with that which you see in your own experience, and in the experience of others, do not you see that it makes all the difference in the world whether natural laws have a palpitating heart behind them, and a guiding intelligence over them? Do not you see that natural laws are barren and fruitless till they are taken hold of by human volition? And yet, men still reason that there is no such thing as special providence. They say, "It is absurd to teach that the divine will does anything. Natural law does everything." It is a lie! Every wise household pronounces it false. Every organized business pronounces it false.

Well, since man is so strong that he can make all natural laws serve him, he saddles them, and rides them. They are his bow, by which he projects the golden arrow of success. Natural laws are

means; they are servants; and what they do depends upon how they are used. The elements essential to a successful life are natural law, human volition, and intelligence. You cannot separate them. A man is made mighty, and is carried through civilization by their use. And will you come in and tell me that the most helpless being in the universe—more helpless than the mother or the father; more helpless than the statesman; more helpless than a general; more helpless than a bird, even, is God? Does he say, "I made the world, and set it in motion, and forgot to keep hold of it, and it has gone out of my hand, and all I can do is to wind it up and keep it a-going. I wish I had the power to control it. I see that father down there using all these wonderful agencies that I put into this world; and the laws which I ordained obey him; and he, through these instrumentalities, is able to bless his family. I wish I could bless my children on earth, too"? Away with any such idea as that God stands behind laws, and must not touch them; as that he is outside of his world, and must not meddle with it. There is nothing in this world so imbecile as such a God as that, except the fool who made the conception of it. All this show of science, all this pretentious modernism, all the wonderful revelations of natural law, and what not, which undertake to exclude God from the globe, are unphilosophical, are unscientific, and are perpetually answered by the living experiences of mankind. And we have only this to say: that if God is comparable to the average of ordinary men and women, he can meddle with natural laws; and he does, for your benefit and for mine. And it does not destroy the economy of the globe that he does do it.

Do you suppose, when wool is put on the wheel of the old housewife (some of you may remember the days when such a thing was known), and she spins it out in long threads, that it is a violation of natural law, because the wool was made to grow on a sheep's back? It was made to grow on a sheep's back at first, for him; but afterwards it was designed to serve you. And is it a violation of natural law that the shuttle carries the thread backward and forward to make cloth for you? No. Natural law is a weaver. God meant that it should be. And all through the world natural laws are not like wax candles, standing up and burning at one end, unable to stir or do a thing. They are subtle. They split into endless applications. They may be used in numberless ways. They take on human thought, and they take in human feeling. They serve those that know how to persuade them. The most subtle, and the most used of all agencies are these natural laws, by which men build up and take down; by which they bring within their reach all that the

hand can do, and all that the eye can discover. And what is it but the control of the human spirit over natural law? And is God less than a man? Is he not even as big as a philosopher?

If, then, any of you have been shaken from your confidence in special providence by the scientific sciolism of the day, I beseech of you to think again.

2. While there is a divine special providence, it does not set aside any natural law. It proceeds according to natural laws, and works by them. It is in fulfillment of our highest duties to moral law that God's providence meets us. In other words, we are not to trust to divine providence until after we have exhausted the resources of our own knowledge. And in general, divine providence will work from the law which you accept, and to which you are most obedient. The best way for a man to be rid of sickness, is to so observe natural laws as not to get sick. God's special providence is always on the side of the temperate. If you would have deliverance in any emergency, study the circumstances and conditions in which you are. Avail yourself to the uttermost of every resource. The more you exert your own power, the more you study, and the more nearly you obey all natural laws, the nearer will you come to God. It is out of those very laws that operate in the spheres where you are working that God will show his face. It is out of those laws that he will reach forth his hands; and he will employ, not simply the laws that surround you, but the laws that are in you. And your will is to be operative. God will *work in you to will and to do of his good pleasure;* and that will give you deliverance.

So, then, the doctrine of divine special providence does not set aside natural laws. Neither does it set aside human volitions. It does not say to men, "Stand and see the will of God performed for you." If God's special providence succors you, it succors you through yourself. It awakens the reason. It directs the will. It inspires industry. And he is helped of God who has learned to help himself. The doctrine of special providence does not protect indolence. On the contrary, as its conditions imply the use of one's own faculties, in the belief that God watches, and that God sympathizes, and that God helps those that help themselves, it tends to enterprise, to fidelity, and to unremitting endeavor.

3. The whole experience of the world, even from a scientific point of view, corroborates and illustrates the declaration of our Saviour—namely, that law and providence are on the side of the highest moral qualities. In other words, the man that aims at the noblest manhood will secure the most of all the things that lie below manhood.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

If you get them, you get them with a great deal more. And I say that while there is a vague acceptance of this, there is apt to be a skepticism about it. Men, just at the point where they are obliged to choose between integrity and purity of character and success, are apt to fall from the higher, and seek success first, and say, "Afterwards we will whip round and get character and integrity." But the experience of the world is that they who seek *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness, draw the largest train of common worldly blessings with them.

A contrary idea arises from those epochs of controversy and of conflict which have originated from irregularities in life. There are times when men are thrown out of their normal conditions—times of war, times of revolution, times of persecution—when nothing seems acting in the sphere of law, uninterruptedly, and all connection between cause and effect appears at fault. Under such circumstances a man may dwell in his highest manhood, and yet dwell in the wilderness. And even in regard to what are the more exceptional cases, if you measure human life by the happiness which men enjoy in it (and that is the popular measure), I aver that the outcasts and those that are persecuted for righteousness' sake, not only obey the command to *rejoice* and be *exceeding glad*, but are gladder than men who are in worldly prosperity. Take a man who is living for the exaltation of moral principle; take a man who is giving himself for a noble cause, whatever it may be. One man gives himself to temperance; he seeks to deliver his fellows from the thrall of violent passions; and he neither amasses wealth nor seeks to exalt himself in life. He lives poorly. By and by his frugality becomes poverty. Another man has lived prosperously, luxuriously, royally. He seeks physical pleasure, and he gets it. And if you take the gauge of those two men's hearts, God knows, and you know, that the man who has lived for a great moral end, sacrificing every earthly hope, has had more hours irradiated with happiness than the man who has lived for the gratification of his lower nature. He may have been a poor man; but he has reaped more real enjoyment in the world than the self-indulgent man who seemed to have everything his own way. For the power of being happy does not consist in what you have.

"A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

It depends upon how many chords there are in a man's heart which vibrate to the touch of joy; and a man who is obese in a lower prosperous life is all the time covering up those noblest chords

from which the highest happiness resounds; while a man who lives for a noble end by noble motives, and keeps his conscience clear and clean, has touched in him, by airy hands, chords that give forth music such as is never known to the lower nature.

Take a man who has run through the whole career of influence and power in politics, and in the better kinds of them—those that mix a certain sort of integrity and patriotism with the service of of the State; take a man who has been advanced, step by step, and has gone through the Legislature, and has got to Congress, and has risen from the House to the Senate, and has at last come to the Vice-presidency (that is usually fatal to any man), and has perhaps touched the Presidency; take a man who gives his whole life to ambitions which lead him into circumstances where he is continually stirred up with malign feelings—take such a man, and review his history. Look at the elements of his experience—all the care, all the fear, all the collisions, all the weariness, all the disappointments, all the suspicions, all the envies, all the jealousies, all the bitter hatreds, all the fiery turmoils, all the emergencies, which he has gone through, and in which he is obliged to fortify himself, and fight innumerable adversaries, some attacking him from beneath, some pouring hot shells on his head from above, some on one side, and some on another, giving him battle. Trace the life of such a man, if living in his lower nature, and he is all his life long going to be happy, going to be happy, and going to be happy, and you will find that the happiness to which he attains is not to be compared with the happiness of the humble man who devotes his life to some benevolent object. I do not believe that of the men who rise to the highest places in public life, one in a hundred is to be envied, if happiness is to be the test. It seems to me that they are to be pitied, rather. But Garrison, who was regarded as a poor wretch, who was pitied by other men, who was accommodated with eggs that nobody wanted, who was all his life a foot-fall under fools' feet, and who was hunted up and down—I venture to say that he had more happiness, more exhilaration (more during his persecution, to say nothing of the joys of his old age) that made him say, "I would give more for one such hour as this than for a round year of common enjoyments—" I venture to say that he had more such happiness than the most successful man in political life. The fact is simple: If you play on the chords in the top of a man's head, you get music the sweetest and the longest prolonged; and if you play on basilar chords, they are dull, and snap heavily, and the music is poor in quality anyhow. If you take the exceptional cases of men that are, for the sake of integrity and principle, persecuted and cast out, there is more joy in a

prison than in the palace that is over it. There was more joy on a cross than among the barbarous soldiers that had the power to crucify the Holy One. There is often more joy in men that are poor than among the rich. There is more joy in those that give their life and their everything than in those that are rich because they give nothing.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you [by and by].

I never knew a man yet who had not the means of paying for his keeping in one hotel—Greenwood. Everybody will reach that. And until you get there you need not be a bit afraid. You will always have strength to get to the grave. Men act as though they feared they would not. They fret, and fuss, and do not know what will become of them. The worst thing that can happen to you is not dying. That is the best thing that can happen to you. It is the end of all care. You need not be troubled. There is a bow that is shooting you, and that will certainly carry you to that mark. You will never stumble nor fall so but that you can get to the grave. The grave is the gate of heaven. It is the dawn of a better day. It is the beginning of an unobstructed life in which all things shall be added to you. You will always have enough given to you of food and clothes to get you to the end of life. And the nearer it comes, the better for you—often. Many and many a man lives too long, by half.

But then, while these things are true on that side, there is another view—namely, the general declaration that spiritual morality produces temporal benefit. Is not that borne out by the inspection of society, and life itself? What have been the facts of civilization? We all admit that *civilization* is a term affecting the ennobling of human life in the individual collectively. It is a term of prosperity as applied to ages or nations.

Now, has civilization depended upon the predominance of material force, or has civilization followed the line of moral sense, and the line of the æsthetic, and the line of the good, the true and the beautiful?—for these have been the three angels that have led men up, step by step, in power, in abundance, and in happiness.

Or, looking at it in another point of view, what classes are they in the community that are prospering most? Single men there seem to be who rush along the road of prosperity, and succeed, not by moral law, but in spite of moral law. I shall not discuss their cases. Their end is to be the judge. But, taking classes, what class in the community is it that is the most prosperous! Are the men who sacrifice everything to their appetites and passions as a general

thing the most prosperous men? The men that lie; the men that forswear themselves; the men that are niggard of benevolence; the men that live for themselves; the men of the coldest hearts and the least benefactions; the men that are the most purely selfish—are these the men that prosper, as classes, best? Is it not the public opinion of every village, that the virtuous, the industrious, the frugal, the true, are the ones that thrive?

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

It is not the kingdom of this world. Follow the development of classes, and notice the higher morality in a man. There is not a man who has a thousand lots on the edge of Brooklyn who would not build a church and a school-house on them. He says, "I do not care for religion; I do not care whether the church is Episcopalian or Presbyterian or Methodist; I do not care who runs it; but I want the church." Why do you want it? "Because it will enhance the value of my property." Even dirt goes up in value under such circumstances.

I suppose that there is no class among us that more exemplify a certain principle of the words of the Gospel than the Quakers. Their houses and their lands are proverbial; and they themselves, as a general rule, have the look of the meek. They look as though they had possessed the earth; and a very fat earth, too. They are generally persons who thrive, who live at peace, who are universally respected; and they do extract as much honey from this great world-flower as any other class of people in the whole community. And is it not irresistibly evident that their prosperity is the natural effect of a cause—the moral ideas that they are living on? And does not the one flow in the train of the other?

Take those sects that are most rigid. Take, for instance, the Calvinists of New England. Persons rail at them; but they were men that believed in their doctrines. They put God first, the commonwealth next, and the citizen next; and they lived accordingly. And where do you find prosperity that averages as it does in Switzerland and Scotland and New England? Men may rail as much as they please; but there are the facts. There is the old New England territory, so naturally thin and cold and sterile that ordinary men would have starved on it; and it took the Calvinists to cultivate it. There was that in them which put steel on the edge of their every instrument, and made it cut. They brought to bear industry, and the sternness of the doctrines of God, and the stimulus of the divine impulse, on all the purposes of their life; and they redeemed the wilderness, and built a structure of government such as never was built anywhere else. Thorough-blooded were they; and the blood

of the Yankee has been the salvation of the continent. You do not like to believe that. It does not make any difference whether you do or not, there is the fact. If you go to the extremest borders of our country, even on the northwest, the west, or southwest, and find a man that takes the lead in education, he is a Yankee—or his wife is. If you find a man that manages a bank, he is a Yankee. If you find a man that is an engineer or a manager on a railroad, he is a Yankee. If you find a man in a position that requires foresight and calculation, he is a Yankee. I do not mean to say that there are no others in such positions; but the fact is so general that there is a philosophy deducible from it. You will find that everywhere the calculating, methodical Yankee brain is developing and systematizing the resources of the country, and making it strong and rich. You may damn the Yankee as much as you please, but it has been that Calvinistically bred Yankee brain that has made the foundations of this government firm and secure. It was the Yankee conscience that smote the devil of slavery and destroyed it; and it is the Yankee heart that will build school-houses all over the land, and defend the poor and weak, and make justice the stability of our times. And righteousness will rain down on future generations in this land, not because these men were Yankees, but simply because they obeyed the divine injunction,

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

A nation that has faith in that, and that puts moral principle higher than anything else, will suffer for it, and will have dark times, and revolutions, it may be; but, after all, it is a fact which is corroborated by history, that they who seek God's kingdom and righteousness, shall have everything else in over-measure.

There is a lesson in this to every young man. There is a lesson in it to those who are preparing to launch their bark on the sea of life. There is a lesson in it to those who look upon the ill-gotten success and temporary prosperity that will fall rotten to the ground. If you do not believe in the Word of God, then take your interpretation from history, and you will find that on an average, through multitudes, and from age to age, he who uses his reason most clearly, and his moral sense most fruitfully, and his conscience most persistently, will have all lower blessings in the greatest abundance.

Once more, we shall see the compass by which men steer in trouble. When the prosperity of a man is interrupted, then the devil comes behind him and whispers, "Save yourself. A little obliquity, a little yielding to custom, will save you." When integrity is beckoning him, and the world on the other side is making fair

promises, then the devil says, "This is the way to prosperity—to go down; to sacrifice to the flesh, to the pocket, to lust, and to dishonor." "No," says the voice of God, "if there is any time when a man must stand for himself and for his manhood, and keep his hands clean, and his heart pure, it is when things are going against him. They will only go that way a little while. In the end everything will serve an honest man." Such is God's decree. All the universe is helping a man to be manly who will only help himself. And at these very times when you are tempted to give up principle for the sake of worldly things, the voice of God comes to you, saying, "Seek first my kingdom and its righteousness. Be an honest man, a true man, a bold and strong man. Stand up, and hold yourself back from destruction, if you do not your property. Keep yourself floating, and everything else will come by and by." A man that has lost himself, and saved his property, has saved nothing; but a man who has saved himself, though he has lost his property, has saved everything that is worth saving. It is that which is inside of a man, and not that which is outside of him, that determines value.

How long shall it be before the world will learn these simple truths? How strange it is to hear them announced by the Peasant of Galilee—by this Mechanic—laboring among the working men of his time! Jesus, standing and looking on the toilers of the sea (of the Lake of Gennesaret), and surrounded by the crowds of working people, in this matchless discourse, announced principle after principle, with all the brevity of an axiom, and in parabolic forms, which for two thousand years the world has been slowly finding out to be true. Whence came this wisdom that anteceded experience? Whence came this regency of mind that overlooked the lives of men and the courses of time? To me he was not a peasant, but it was only a peasant form that he wore. To me he was not a genius of moral ideas, but the Author of them—the Father of thought, and the Father of history, clothed with the flesh, that he might know his own household, or that they might learn to know him. He stood there—he that from his glorious estate in heaven had bowed himself down to dwell among men, that he might save them; and from his lips how fitly fall these maxims that have created the world and its prosperity, and that will yet bring the world to its millennial glory!

Men and brethren, let us take heed to these teachings of God's providence, to these teachings of God's word, and to our own experience in them. Whatever else we give up, let us hold steadfastly to our faith in that providential government which supervises all our ways; to our faith that the laws on our side are those that will lead us highest and nearest to God; to our faith that if we "seek

first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," we shall be in the line of that providence which makes up the deficiencies of our mortal reason, which guides our weak will, which guards us, and which will finally save us.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We adore thee, thou that art highest and best, our God and our Father. We adore thee for what thou hast manifested thyself to be—for all the glory which thou hast shed abroad upon the earth; for all the mercy which thou hast vouchsafed to man; for the revelation of thyself in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; for all the truth which has come from him, and by which the Holy Ghost has been brought home to us. We rejoice in thy government. Thy laws are holy, and just, and good. There is peace in pursuing the paths of righteousness. We rejoice in our experience of thy goodness. How much should we rehearse the story of our life! What argument of trust and gratitude there is in it! We rejoice that we were reared under Christian auspices, and from our earliest life taught the things which pertain to salvation. We thank thee that thou hast granted unto us so much of the joys of life, and that sorrows have been ministered unto us mercifully, and that thou hast made them to be a discipline, and not a destruction. We thank thee that thou hast drawn us together into the fellowship of the Gospel, and that we have so many hopes in common, so much of the life that now is, irradiated by the life which is to come.

We rejoice in all the mercies which thou hast vouchsafed to us in the household—its sweet affections, and all its blessed light. And we beseech of thee, O Lord our God! that since thou hast sustained us thus far, our cup running over, our lines falling in pleasant places, our feet in green pastures, and by the side of still waters, we may learn from all the past, more than ever to rest in thy word; to lean wholly upon thy promises, to walk securely and safely and restfully in the way of duty. Why should we be disturbed with care, with pain, or with burdens? Why should we, over whose head springs the arch of our Father's house, act as slaves, and look up affrighted, or bow down drudged? Art thou not our Lover and our Friend? And when thou judgest, is it not love? And when thou dost smite, is it not still the Father's hand? And is not all our life a varied experience of the blessedness of thy government for our soul's good. Grant that we may more and more treat thee as children, since we are treated by thee as a Father. And we pray more and more that the life that is in us may abound in things right and true and good. May we seek to please thee above all others.

And grant, we pray thee, that every one in thy presence may be led to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ. May there be awakened in every one a spiritual insight. May every one that has never before known faith, have the beginnings of that life which comes by faith and by love.

We pray that thou wilt grant that those who have long walked in Christian experience, that those who have been soldiers in thine army, may be true to the end. It is but a few days for many. If in patience they possess their souls, all their conflicts will be over ere long, and then there will be no more storms for them. Brighter and brighter shines the east. Grant, we pray thee; that they may have strength to walk to the end of life in an affectionate trust in that Redeemer who never has left them nor forsaken them.

We pray that those who are bearing the burden and the heat of the day may be strengthened so as that they shall fulfill all their duties as becomes the children of God. May they remember their vocation. May they remember the honor and the dignity which thou hast put upon them. May they not dishonor their Father which is in heaven.

We pray that thou wilt grant that those that are beginning the Christian life, inexperienced, full of mistakes, full of alternations of feeling, may know the love of Christ to their souls, which overcame their selfishness; which called them when they were afar off; which has been beforehand with them.

Grant, we pray thee, that they may never distrust the nourishing love of God. And may they feel that they are strong, not in themselves, not in their own will, not in the means with which they surround themselves, but in the Lord that loved them and redeemed them, giving his own precious life for them. In Him may they be strong.

We pray for those who mourn over their easily besetting sins; who fall so often; who come back so slowly; to whom the yoke is yet a yoke; and to whom the burden is very heavy. Wilt thou deliver them. May they not parley with the things that are behind. May they not look back, even. May they press forward, forgetting the things which are behind, toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt be near to those who long and hesitatingly have been looking wistfully toward the better life, and have not entered upon it. Oh! draw them. Bring them back to the right way—to the way of holiness; to the way by which they shall walk heavenward, more and more dispossessing sin and selfishness. Grant that they may enter upon the royal way, and that they too, may become servants of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

We pray for those that are thralled in sin. We pray for those that are bowed down and are slaves of Satan. We pray for those that are in the darkness of doubt. We pray for all that suffer through uncertainty.

We beseech of thee to remember those that do not remember thee. We pray for the prayerless. We pray for those who have no longer any on earth to pray for them. We pray for those who have forgotten their father and their mother, who are in glory, and their Father who is in heaven, and who is greater than all.

We pray for the poor; for the outcast; for those that are in vice, and neglected therein; for all criminals; for all that are guilty; for those that are in prison. Bless those that carry to them the word of truth, and cast a better light of consolation upon their path. And we beseech of thee that as they come in the name of Christ, they may bear the Spirit and the love of Christ. And may many be snatched as brands from the burning.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless all those who are seeking to build up the cause of temperance, and to promote morality in those that are cast down by their passions. May they be strong in word and in deed.

We pray for the reformation of morals throughout these great cities, and in all our land. And revive thy work, we pray thee, in all our churches. May the truth be more and more powerful. And we beseech of thee that justice and equity may everywhere prevail. Turn and overturn till He whose right it is shall come and reign. Fulfill those promises which long have hung unripening. At last, may they begin to drop down their fruit. We pray for that glorious day when men shall learn war and violence no more; when they shall torment and beat each other down no more; when peace shall be universal; and when purity and truth and justice shall rule in all the earth. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises everlasting.—*Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our heavenly Father, we thank thee for all the monitions of thy word. We thank thee for all the examples which it records. We thank thee for all the truth which has through after ages come forth to corroborate thy divine annunciations. May we not seek the flesh. May we not seek the things that perish in the using. May we not seek that specious and glittering prosperity which is as the frost-pictures of winter which perish almost by the breath of him that looks upon them. May we lay up our treasure in heaven. May we send holy thoughts there for investment. May our hearts follow there those whom they have loved. May we twine our affection around about them. O, Lord of our salvation, there may we have more expectation, more hope, more desire, more that waits for our coming, than anywhere else. And as we are growing old, and the years that are before us are fewer than those which are behind us, grant that we may more earnestly take hold of these great verities. And may we live so convoyed, protected, comforted, and blessed of thy Spirit, that when we depart we shall pass from glory to glory, and be forever with the Lord.

And to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, shall be praise forevermore. *Amen*.

THE LAW OF BENEVOLENCE.

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."—GAL. vi., 10.

THIS is only a special application of the great law of benevolence as it was interpreted by the Master, and which he represented to be the center and substance of religion, its animating spirit, as developed under the auspices of the old dispensation, and certainly the inspiring element of religion as to be developed still further under the auspices of his own spiritual kingdom. *Do good to all men*—that is the comprehensive law.

1. This *doing good* is an exceedingly wide thing. It may be, and in its highest form it is, conferring spiritual good,—so addressing yourself to men that they become wiser, purer, more just, more truly inspired with the whole spirit of Christian love and kindness. We are to lose no proper opportunity to inspire men with religious growth, distinctively so called.

But it includes, also, all other forms of doing good. It includes all activity in the direction of material assistance. We are to do good to all men in their political relations as members of the State. We are to do good by public spirit, which is only another inflection of the general feeling of benevolence as applied to the welfare of the community. We are to seek to do good to all men in these various ways.

As men are largely dependent for their culture upon that abundance out of which grows leisure for higher inspirations, so doing good to men in this general formula includes all benefits conferred of a commercial and business-like character. And all material assistance, whether it be helpfulness, whether it be advice, whether it be the actual lending of your strength, your time, or your means, is likewise included.

But there is even a wider sphere of doing good than this. It is, in its most comprehensive form, such a carriage of your whole life and disposition and nature as shall make men feel happier and bet-

SUNDAY MORNING, April 23, 1871. LESSON: ROM. XII. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 199, 816, 1061.

ter wherever you go. A man is himself a university of influences. He has his reason, his religious side, his social nature, his economic element, his whole material and physical organization; and the command is to so carry one's whole self throughout, that the influence of a man's living, and of his whole presence shall be to confer happiness, prosperity and joy upon men—not only to make them better, but to make them *feel* better. As it is specified in another place, we are to *please men to edification*—that is, to build them up. We are to please them in such things as will make them better.

This does not exclude pain-giving. It is not to be that kind of goodness which deals only with lenity and with gentleness; because goodness sometimes requires sternness and justice, and even the infliction of suffering. But it is never vengeful. It is never to be giving pain for the sake of giving pain. It is to be a ministration of love, such as a man has at the hand of a surgeon, a physician, a teacher, a parent. The malign disposition, which is one that loves pain for the sake of pain, is never to be a part of Christian nurture or Christian ethics; but whatever men do, in the whole round of their life, is to be done for the sake of making men better and happier around about them.

2. We are to do this, the Apostle says, *as we have opportunity*—which would seem to be a caution against partitioning off a man's time officially, and giving certain days to doing good, and all the rest of the time to doing what you have a mind to. There are men who feel the obligation of doing good on Sunday; there are those who, though they do not think, in their business relations or in their official relations that they are particularly bound to do good any further than to keep within the limits of custom and law, yet feel that when certain days come round—Christmas-days, and Thanksgiving-days, and various festal days—they are bound to do good. They feel that on such days as these, when a decent public sentiment requires that everybody should be happy and should exchange tokens of happiness, they must do something. But the apostle says, as it were, "Not only then, but always; whenever you have a chance; in season and out of season." That is to say, we are to do good at regular periods and in regular methods, not only, but in irregular methods and at irregular periods. We are to do good at unexpected times. Whenever there is an opportunity—that is the time for a man to do good to his fellow-men.

Sometimes men are to make opportunities; but if one be possessed of a right sensibility, and of a true benevolence, opportunities will be suggested by that sensibility; and his desire to do good will break out in such ways as to find a thousand opportunities

which the mere cold waiter and watcher never finds. Only a full heart can always be ready to fill up these fugitive opportunities. For if one be happy himself only when some unexpected stroke of good luck has come to him, it is but occasionally that he is in a condition to make others happy If, when you are joyous by reason of some fortunate occurrence connected with yourself, you go forth into the street, how many more words you feel disposed to say, how many more kind things you feel disposed to do, how many more opportunities for doing good present themselves to you, than is ordinarily the case! If a man is at peace with himself, and full of gladness, how many opportunities he finds for doing good! whereas, if there come the cold wind of trouble upon him, and he be shut up in the chilling consciousness of his own loss or want, how little he sees of good that he is impelled to do! How few chances come to his notice for the exercise of benevolence! How few people he meets that he wants to speak to! How seldom it is that his desire to do good is awakened!

Opportunities, in other words, may sometimes be said to be but the opening of the gates of a man's own benevolence. He always has opportunities enough who has fullness of sympathy enough; who has the spirit of brotherhood large enough; who has a true love of making happiness.

As we have opportunity is not simply, then, the antithesis of official doing good, or doing good at stated seasons. It indicates that we are to make doing good the very atmosphere and business of our whole religious life. There are opportunities which come but once in a man's life-time. Others come; they are thick; but there are things which a man can do once, and never can do again. In the Spring the furrow lies open, and the farmer puts in his seed; but if that season goes by and he does not put in his seed, the opportunity is lost. And so, many furrows are opened in which men may sow seed once in their lifetime, which seed, if it be sown, shall spring up and be most beautiful in blossom and fruit; but if they neglect to put seed in those open furrows, the opportunity will not come to them again so long as they live. Other furrows will open, and they will have certain chances for doing good; but that chance will never present itself again. And so there must be an alertness and enterprise and watchfulness, and above all a fullness of benevolent disposition, that shall always be pressing and pressing to find opportunities, and to develop itself.

3. We are to do good *to all.*

"As we have opportunity let us do good to all men."

The Saviour says:

"If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?"

All the world has been accustomed to teach that men should do good to their own household. He that neglects his own household is an infidel. In almost all nations, in nations of almost all shades of development—even those that are quite low down in the scale, toward barbarism—there is an impulse to do good to those next to them. And not only are we to do good to our own selves, but we are to do good to those that are within our own households. Frequently benevolence does not act in the household at all. Affection acts there; and if that be small, or extinguished, there is little or nothing else that can supply its place. And so, many a household is without either affection or benevolence. The love-principle there is too small for a generic, and is famine-stricken in the specific. Hence, there are many households which are simply arenas of petty strife. Oftentimes there is no place more malignant, more bitter, more provocative of that which is bad. Oftentimes there is no place so little like the gate of heaven, and so much like the gate of hell.

We are to do good to all men; and, naturally, doing good begins in the household. Every right-minded man, every true man, should exert all his power to make that place where he dwells a bright, central point, glowing with kindly feeling, with real enjoyment, with inspiration and with happiness. The man that does not make those who live in his own house with him happy, has great reason to suspect, I will not say his Christianity, but his manhood. He may plead that he is an invalid. but that plea, while it extenuates, does not excuse. A man should see to it that where he is, there always is most enjoyment. Begin at home; and do not stop at home.

We are not to confine the doing of good to our own household, nor to our own neighborhood, nor even to our own nation. We have a very kindly feeling toward all those that are of our sort. We are very benevolent toward those that are born with us—that are of the same state, or of the same nation. We are, however, a nation that is overrun with persons who were born abroad; and we very naturally tend to cherish the race prejudices. Foreigners, emigrants, the Irish, the Germans, the Africans—we naturally feel that there is a great distinction between them and us. We acknowledge, to be sure, that there should be humanity in our treatment of them: but there is a seam in the garment of our charity; there is a strong welt that runs across it; we feel that we are bound by bands that run closer, and we respond more generously toward those that are of own blood and lineage. But if there was any one

thing that characterized the Gospel, it was that it was universal; that it made no distinction between Jew and Gentile, between bond and free, between high and low. Christ died for the world; and the spirit of benevolence is to be commensurate with the spirit of the Master who gave himself for all.

Nor are we to confine the doing of good even so narrowly as this. We must see to it that we do not have the feeling of brotherhood merely with regard to nationality. We must not allow race-stock to come in. It is very hard to get over this, especially in California, where a man thinks that he is bound to have a brotherly feeling toward everybody that is not Chinese. We feel bound to have brotherly feelings toward those that speak the same language that we do; toward those that believe in the same religion; toward those that are brought up with the same political ideas; but toward outcasts, the imported heathen that come from Oriental or tropical lands, and that are thrown in among us without being grafted on to us—toward these we have almost any other feeling than that of brotherhood. It is very hard to feel brotherhood toward a man that is worshiping an idol, and that wears his hair in a queue, and that has almond-shaped eyes, and a complexion ranging from copper to black. It is hard to call ourselves brothers of men that bear distasteful lineaments and features. Nevertheless that is the mission and message of true Christianity.

"As we have opportunity let us do good to all men."

It does not mean, necessarily, that I am to choose my companions, or to make my intimates of all classes of men. I am not bound to form my intimacies on any principle but that of likeness or agreeable differences. I am at liberty to select for my household, or for my private companionship, those that are congenial to me. But the great race of mankind, without distinction, are to be to me in such a sense brothers as that they shall have the warmest sympathy and the greatest helpfulness that I have the opportunity to confer upon them. Love, not prejudice—it is that which should interpret duty to all men, of every nation, and of every race-stock. A universal brotherhood is to be established. All mankind are to be regarded as objects of the divine beneficence; and therefore all our sympathy should go out toward all for whom the cross was raised; toward all for whom God thinks; toward all upon whom he sends his sun and the seasons. All that he calls children we are to call brethren. And we are not to allow our benevolence to be ribbed with prejudice and to be compressed in narrow channels flowing only here and there in exiguous streams. We are to have a large heart, and a large benevolence in it; and we are to let that flow

out toward every human being that has the capacity to enjoy or to suffer.

4. We are to do good as we have opportunity, *especially toward those that are of the household of faith.* At that time those that drew themselves out from the religion of their fathers, and were brought into the communion of Christian brotherhood, either became poor, or came to such a condition that they shut themselves off from the sympathy of their connections. It is still so in many countries where, under the influence of Christian missions, churches are formed; where the principle of caste exists; where to receive Christ is to give up everything that is dear. And in the olden time, when men became Christians it was an argument for stinginess towards them, and selfishness, and hatred, and persecution; and the open hand was shut up, and the flowing store ceased. Therefore it was that those who came into the Christian church had special need of supporting assistance. That was the reason why the apostle said, *Let us do good, especially unto those who are of the household of faith.*

Every one, entering a church, has a right to feel that he is going into a higher atmosphere than that in which he has been accustomed to move. Every one has a right to feel that when he goes into the church of Christ he goes into an association, a brotherhood, where the principle of gentleness and kindness is carried to a higher degree than it is outside of the church. I know that it is not so. I know that the church is keyed, often, very low in the matter of sympathy. I know that formality, and separations into classes, and divisions by a great many worldly distinctions, break up the sense of brotherhood. I know that too frequently persons who go into the church are like those who go at night to a hotel. Each lodger has his own room, and calls for what he himself needs, and does not feel bound to take care of any of the other lodgers. And a church, frequently, is nothing but a spiritual boarding-house, where the members are not acquainted with each other, and where there is but very little sympathy.

Now, every church should be under the inspiration of such large sympathy and benevolence as to make every one of its members the object of kindly thought and feeling. There should be a public sentiment and an atmosphere of brotherhood in every church. There is no objection in a church to individuality. We do not undertake to break up all these natural and most harmless separations or classifications which socially exist outside of the church. I hold that class, if it be heathen, is devilish, but that it does not need to be heathen. I hold that a man may belong to a class, in the church, or

out of the church, and yet be as full of sympathy, yea, more sympathetic, than he otherwise would be—so much so that he feels an obligation of beneficence toward those that are less favored. But no church is a church of the Lord Jesus Christ in which there is such an introduction of the separations of the world—those which pride courts, and those which vanity foments; in which there is such a spirit of seclusion or separateness that persons coming into it are chilled, and feel desolate and without companionship. It is impossible, perhaps, in a church, for each member to know every other member; but there is such a thing as a public sentiment, there is such a thing as an atmosphere, in a church. And it is this atmosphere, or public sentiment, pervading the whole membership of a church, that is, or will be, more influential in promoting the work of religion, than any ability in eloquence, or any art in beauty. I do not object to architecture. I do not object to music, so that it does not forsake the true mission of music, which is to express deep religious feeling. I do not object to any expression of art in feeling; for art without feeling is a sham; and feeling without art may be vulgar. The highest mission of art is to express the deepest feeling in the fittest way. I do not object to art in architecture and in decoration, so that it is in harmony with right feeling. You may paint your windows and fresco your walls, or not, as you please. It is not particularly essential either way. Art does no harm unless it leads persons to fall more easily into the idolatry of the external. That is to be watched against. But the thing which, above all others, *is* essential, is that there shall be a sympathy and genuine feeling of brotherhood in a church. More than windows, more than ceiling, more than architecture, more than music, more than the pulpit itself, in attraction, should be the genial atmosphere of the whole society and of the whole brotherhood. That is what men *feel*, even when they cannot tell what it is that affects them. That is what makes men, frequently, desire to go to certain congregations, even when the reason why is beyond the explanation of their reason.

In this congregation, although we are far from being perfect, although there is much room for us to grow yet, I think there is a hospitable feeling. I think there is here, to a great degree, a genial feeling. And I think that one of the secrets of the attractiveness of this church is not so much this or that or the other influence in its ministrations, as its spirit of brotherhood and sympathy and generosity and kindness, which in the main exists, and which constitutes a feature of the atmosphere of the whole society.

If the church on earth were full of happiness-makers, there would be no need of further argument for religion. Religion in its love-

form is the best argument for itself. No man wishes to deny it. No man can doubt a fact that exists continually before him. There would not need to be any argument to prove that an orchard was beautiful when its trees were full of fruit. There would be no need of an argument to prove that a vine was fragrant in May, or that it was fruitful in October. No one with a cluster of grapes in his hands needs to be persuaded that the fruit is luscious. The thing itself is its own expounder and interpreter. "By their fruit ye shall know them"—blossom and fruit and all.

Cold and dead churches, churches that are receptacles only as sepulchers are; churches whose members rattle in them almost as the dry bones do in the coffins of the charnel-house—those are arguments of infidelity; and no argument to prove Christianity can be of much validity where the church is hard, or cold, or dead. And no matter how philosophical, and skeptical even, a man may be, if the church clothes all its members with the true spirit of love, and they are full to overflowing with kindness, and the whole church is is developed in the majesty and power of omnipotent and omnipresent love, that disarms all criticism, and takes away all possibility of doubt. No man ever yet needed an argument to prove that light was light, and that it was agreeable. *Ye are the light of the world.* No man needs an argument to prove that fruit is good. *Ye are vines. Ye bring forth fruit to the glory of the Father.*

We are, then, to do good *to all men—especially to those that are of the household of faith.* We are to see to it that the spirit of sympathy and benevolence makes the church the brightest place on earth, where many different kinds of people are connected together.

But then, this passage has been interpreted for exactly the opposite thing. Not only has it been taught that we ought to take care of our own members, but it has been extensively taught that we ought to patronize them. I have no objection to persons patronizing those that are in the same church with them, provided all other things are fittest; but that a Methodist should trade with nobody but a Methodist, and vote for nobody but a Methodist; that a Presbyterian should go out of his way to favor those that belong to his communion, and pass by those that belong to other communions; that the exhibition of all political and economic sympathy should be limited by the lines of sectarianism; that a Congregational church should undertake to bestow its sympathy only where there is Congregational orthodoxy—that is abhorrent to the very spirit of charity. It is a perversion, in express terms almost, of the injunction of our text:

"Let us do good unto all men especially to them that are of the household of faith."

Who are *the household of faith?* All who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth. They may be of the Baptist, the Methodist, the Presbyterian, the Episcopalian, the Roman Catholic, or any other Christian Church. If men love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth, whatever sect they may belong to, they come within the sweep of this command. Do good to them all. Be genial, sympathetic, confiding, benevolent, helpful, in every way. Do not let the outflow of sympathy from your heart be perverted, nor take on the shackles of a technical orthodoxy. There is no man on earth that you can afford to treat otherwise than kindly. Kindness is fitted to everybody. It should be active and diffusive; and yet it should be so concentrated that everybody shall feel it. Your kindness should be such that when a person comes into your presence he shall feel that you have a real interest in his welfare. It should be such that when you meet persons they shall be made happier, and feel that they are of more importance in the world than they ever thought they were before.

With this general exposition, I pass to make some special applications of it.

First, we see what must be added to the popular notion of religion. I would not have religion understood as conveying less of the idea of moral strictness than it now does. It should carry in it the popular notion of forsaking all sin, and clothing one's self with all virtue. And all the customs by which the experience of the race throughout ages has established the distinction between right and wrong, should be preserved—certainly by those who belong to the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor would I have religion understood as conveying the idea of less correct beliefs. I would not have belief despotic. I would not have orthodoxy severe and unrelenting. Yet the distinction between truth and error should be preserved. Carelessness as to what a man believes can never be wholesome. The desire of knowing, and of knowing accurately and truly, is a noble desire, alike in the school of philosophy and in the school of religion. I would have churches, therefore, teach distinctly what men believe. Every church must have a creed. If it is held together, it must be held together by something in common. And whatever that is which holds it together in common, is its creed, whether it be written or unexpressed. And all those great influential lines of belief by which the church separates itself from the world, I would have it impress upon all that are under its influence.

I would not have less systematic benevolence carried on. There are many things in the work of benevolence which can be abbrevi-

ated, economized, made more searching and more thorough by classification and division of labor; and therefore there ought to be not less, but if anything more, systematic benevolence in the church. But while these things are maintained—morality and systematic organization—by the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ in common, there ought to be more social sympathy and kindness among its members.

This is the spirit which, if it be comparatively speaking low down, is on that very account naturally interpreted in favor of religion. It is just that which meets the wants of most men.

A man with whom the world has gone wrong; in whose house has been death; in whose business has been bankruptcy; who has fallen, it may be, from companionship here and there; who is struggling with accumulated misfortunes; who is despondent; and who right in the years of mid-life wishes that it were already sundown, wanders (as one within the sound of my voice very well remembers) into the street seeking the waves; he hears singing; his attention is arrested by the hymn; he is lifted up, as it were, by it through the air. Scarcely knowing what he does, he follows the sound; and he is met at the door of the church,—not imperiously, not irritably, not with a Martinet insistance upon minute particulars, but kindly. He is not shoved hither and thither; but a kind hand is laid on his shoulder, and a gentle voice says to him, "Wait. Do not go away. As quick as I can I will wait on you. Step in." That familiar kindness is strange to his ear; and the hymn still goes on; and he is drawn within the house. The man that shows him this courtesy and kindness does not know that he is saving a soul from death. He takes him to a vacant seat far up toward the pulpit. There is a warmth of genialness in the congregation. And when the service has been gone through with, the truth has been poured into an open heart. One that needed consolation has received it; and all thought of suicide has flown away, with the feeling that inspired it. He now turns about wistfully for sympathy. Is there any one in the house that will show him kindness? One greets him, a stranger though he be, and says, "Come again; we shall be glad to see you here." It was not much to say, but it has saved a heart from despair. It has opened a new avenue of love, and given birth to the feeling, "There are those that care for my soul." He goes again at night. And he goes from Sunday to Sunday. He goes month after month. And by and by, through the grace of God, he stands the object of saving mercy through fidelity and support.

I tell you, while the truth preached does much good, the kind hearts of the men who are listening to the preaching, the real spirit

of brotherhood that draws them near to you—near to your person; near to your tongue; near to your heart; those love-greetings by which men are made to feel that they have come to a place where a man is thought of without regard to external trappings—these break down all opposition, and preach the Gospel. And often there is much more Gospel preached at the door-end of the church than at the pulpit-end. They that do not look for the gloved hand; they that do not judge by the apparel; they that see in the face of a man the marks of care and trouble, and perceive that he needs sympathy and kindness—they are bearing to him a Gospel which he will understand better than any exposition or any doctrinal discussion. And that kind of preaching which we need is the preaching of the great heart of the congregation in brotherly sympathy to all that need succor.

Men may spread the Gospel, and prepare the way for religion by carrying to men an active sympathy—a brotherly principle. But there is discretion to be used in preaching to men on the subject of religion. When persons first come to the Lord Jesus Christ, they are often exhorted to work for the salvation of others. It is said to them, "Now that you have become a Christian you must do good." Instantly they begin to think, "What shall I do?" And one person says to them, "Why do you not take a district and distribute tracts?" Another person says, "Do you join a Sunday-School and teach a class."

I am not mentioning these things to ridicule them. Often they are just the things which persons are benefited by undertaking; and often they are just the things by which they can do the most good. But I ridicule the idea that these few methods by which we reach people are all the resources that we have of doing good. One says, "Do you mean that I shall ask a man how his soul does?" No, I do not. You, little beardless young fellow, have a start in life; and the first man you meet is a man of perhaps ten times your stature every way; and you go and talk to him, saying, "How is your soul, sir?" I do not mean any such thing as that. If the man were sick, if he were wounded unto death on the battle-field, a child might speak to him without abashment, because time presses; because his life is oozing away; because now, if ever, he must hear the central truth of religion. But in nine cases out of ten you must be a John Baptist preparing the way of the Lord to men.

Now, when you are converted, if those that are accustomed to work with you in the shop, or to be with you in the store, are unconverted, and you instantly go back to them with your catechism and your confession of faith, they will laugh at you, and say, "Ah!

a new broom sweeps clean. You have got into the church, and you think that you must walk straight." And you set them against you. But if you are kind to them; if you take upon yourself services that otherwise would fall upon them; if you serve them for love's sake; if you are more discreet, and in talking you avoid topics that are disagreeable to them; if you are willing to work later to give them a longer evening; if you, by a hundred kindnesses, cover up their faults, and rest under blame rather than expose them; and if in all your relations with them you are generous, and thoughtful of their welfare, they will soon learn to respect you. And they will say to each other of you, "Something has come over him. He is better than he was before." Why do they think that you are better than you were before? Because in so many ways you send out the pointed flame of sympathy and kindness, and are burning the dross out of their thoughts, and are making yourself agreeable to them, not by pandering to their wickednesses, but by doing good to them. You do not necessarily do good to them by instruction; but you do them good through taste; you do them good through your power of amusement; you do them good in any way in which you can do good to them.

A person who has been endowed with richness of musical talent has a wonderful power of doing good. When persons are converted to the Lord, sometimes they put away all their music; they put away the festive dance; they put away the gay entertainment. Nay, nay; keep them; but when you sing, it is a Christian heart that is merry. What if it be a carol, or love-song, or world-song? If your heart has seen Jesus, and you know the power of the world to come, sing it. Sing, not for your own sake, but for the sake of others. It is a coin that will pass current; it will draw men to you; and they will find that you are not shut off from them. Participate in amusement, but not in mere gayety, as if that were all. The moment the heart is touched by the Spirit of God, the Comforter, the Enlightener, it gives a different character to everything that you do.

My second mother (the only one that I knew) was the stateliest, and the devoutest, and the most crystalline, and the loftiest of women. She was undemonstrative in affection; but she was my very ideal of propriety, and elegance, and perfection, and taste. And yet I remember that one day when my father was playing on the violin (it happened to be an old melody that she was familiar with) in a neighboring room, and we were sitting in the dining-room, she came out on the floor (for she had been a belle, and had often tripped the light fantastic toe) and lifted her hands gracefully, and commenced dancing around the room. I had never seen such a thing in

that house before! I looked on with astonishment! The color came to my cheeks, and the light to my eyes! And I have thought that if my mother had danced a little oftener, and said the catechism a little less often, it would have been a thousand times better for me.

If you have gifts, whatever they are, of beauty, consecrate them. If you have the gift of art, consecrate it. If you have the gift of eloquence, consecrate it. If you have the gift of poetry, consecrate it. If you have the gift of emotion, consecrate it. If you have any gift, whatever it is, make sure that you root it in genuine sympathy, and that you exercise it. With a whole heaven before you, child of God, child of eternity, brother of the whole race, now sing; now go forth in your gayety. There is a moral meaning to it that will redeem it from all possibility of perversion. It has a meaning that will annihilate the distance which there is between your heart and the hearts of other people. It will draw people to you. You want people baptized in the fountain of your sympathy and love. That which is wanted above everything else, is to draw men to your heart.

When Christ went to the miserable, he went *to* them; and when he laid his hand on them, he laid it *on* them. He did not hold himself aloof from them. He touched them with his own person, with his own body, as much as to say, "You and I are one." And when we would do good to men, we must give them more of ourselves than mere formulated words can convey. The heart must somehow or other take hold of men. And I would say to the person who is brought into the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, If God has endowed you with gifts, consecrate them to the work of common benevolence. Do not think of maiming them. Do not disbranch yourself, but consecrate everything you have. You have much to work with; and by the voice, by the eye, by the hand, by the soul, by everything, make men about you more happy. Make yourself more necessary to their happiness. And that will give you an opportunity to do them good spiritually; for by and by they will ask you for that which, if you were to intrude it upon them in the first instance, they would not receive.

So, while there is a great deal of general instruction to be given in Sabbath-schools, and Bible classes, and religious meetings, let no man think that these are exclusively the ways in which a man is to do good. He is to do good *as he has opportunity*, according to his faculties. Love men, and love them enough; seek their happiness and welfare, and seek it long enough; make yourself felt by them personally and beneficially—that is your business.

And here I may say, In carrying out this work beware, while you do not neglect home, that you do not confine the disclosure of yourself to your own household. It is right for a bird to make herself a nest, and put the finest moss and softest feathers in that nest, and it is right that she should sit upon it. It is right that she should have but one chamber—for birds never build for more than themselves and their own. But they are only birds, and do not know any better. It is for us to build a broad nest. To build it so that nobody can get into it but ourselves, to line it with our own prosperity, and to selfishly fill it with everything that is sweet and soft —that is not right.

I think that a man's house ought to be a magazine of kindness. Its windows ought to send out light. I like, when I go by a house at night, to see the window-shutters open so that the light shines forth from inside. Though I dislike to have my own open, yet I think how many persons would be made happier if in passing through the streets they saw the light blazing out of the houses. There are a thousand such little things by which others may be made happy.

A person says, "I will put this clump of flowers under the parlor window." No, no; put them by the gate. A thousand will see them there, where one would see them in that other place. A person says, "I will put this plant back where nobody can reach it." Well, do; but put two close to the fence, where they can be reached. I like to see little hands go through the pickets and pluck off flowers. And if you say, "That is stealing," then let it be understood through all the neighborhood that it is not stealing. There are some who seem to have such a sense of property that if they had a hundred magnolia trees in full blossom on their premises, they would want the wind to blow from the north and south and east and west, so that all the fragrance would come into their own house; whereas the true spirit would be a desire that a thousand others should be blessed by these bounties as well as themselves.

I think that it is generally the spirit of horticulture. If a man has fine fruit, he is crazy to give it away, and he runs all over the neighborhood to find somebody to enjoy it with him. If a man has an abundance of choice flowers, he is not stingy with them. He enjoys them by giving them away. The great trouble in planting largely is that you have not folks enough to give your flowers to.

You say, "That is a natural feeling." Well, what is a religious feeling but a natural feeling raised up and spiritualized and sanctified?

I would have your homes made, not less, but more; but in making

them engines of happiness, see that other people participate in that happiness as well as you. Make your dwelling beautiful; but not for your own eyes alone. Fill it sumptuously, if you have the grace to rightly use that sumptuosity. Let the feet of the poor step on your plushy carpet. Let their eyes behold the rich furniture of your apartments. Would it make their home less to them? Not necessarily. If you take a child by the hand—you, whose name is great in the town; you, who tower up in power above all your neighbors; if you lay your hand on his head, and call him "Sonny;" if you bring him into your house; if you go to the cupboard and take out the unfamiliar cake, or what not, that children so much like (for the senses must be appealed to in childhood before the spirit can be reached; and by feeding the mouth of a child you come to his affections and feelings); if you show him your rooms, and give him something in his pocket to carry home and show his aunt or sister, do you suppose that child ever thinks you are *stuck up*, or looks on you with an unkindly eye? When he comes into the neighborhood again, and your house dawns upon him, he remembers, the moment he sees it, how happy you made him there. And that house of yours can be made to bless generation after generation.

God be thanked for these great village mansions out of which comes so much food for the hungry; out of which comes so much raiment for the naked; out of which come so many watchers for the sick; out of which come so many genial advisers for those who are in circumstances of embarrassment; out of which comes so much bounty to those around about them that the whole community come to feel an ownership in them. Do you suppose that wealth can ever be perverted by ministering to the comfort of the neighborhood where it exists?

As you have opportunity, do good to all men. Build your house large; furnish it richly; but it is to be consecrated to making people happy. Let your doors be wide; let them turn on their hinges without squeaking; let people come in as the air comes; let your hospitality be shown freely to one and another. So living, you cannot be too royal.

Oh! what an artist God is! And if he makes his foot-stool as beautiful as the earth is made, how does he make his throne? If he covers his heavens with these evanescent frescoes; if he paints these panoramas which we see moving through the summer sky; if he creates such statuary as we see everywhere exhibited in winter, what, think you, is the decoration of his house where his children come home to dwell with him forever?

Do not be afraid to build fine houses; and do not be afraid to

spend large sums of money in their decoration; but remember that these houses are not for you alone, but for everybody.

So much for home; and in going forth from it, I call your attention to the significant feature of religion as you will find it set forth in the epistles as well as the life of Christ, if you look them through —its *gentlemanliness.* I know of no other word that will express the idea. Not only were the apostles themselves—and Paul conspicuously—men of the utmost courtesy, in the highest sense of the word, but there is not a vulgarizing maxim in the New Testament. There is not one that looks toward vulgarism. There is not one that the most polished and noble soul does not feel to be the expression of its highest want. "Mind not high things," said Paul, "but condescend to men of low estate."

Now, a true Christian man, a real gentleman, while he speaks to his neighbor's child, and to his natural companions, will never let any one pass that he has access to, without courtesy—and more, as men need more.

Here is a plain man; and a kindness to him is a kindness as much as it would be to your heart-neighbor whom affection leads you to bestow more care upon than upon others. Courtesy in life should be such that they shall have most kindness who need most; but kindness is so distributed in society that those who need the most have the least.

What makes class so hateful, is, that men shut themselves up in superiority; that when men, having wealth, have leisure, they take that leisure and separate themselves from other men, thus building up a wall of partition between themselves and others. There is more sectarianism outside of the church than in it. There is a widespread sectarianism among men who classify themselves without thought of others. But when men who are superior hold themselves in the spirit of the Gospel, which is, that *the greatest is he that serves the most*, and that *the strong are God's natural protectors of the weak*, then all opposition and abuse from the community is disarmed. Therefore, if you see a plain man, speak to him. He is not of your sort; he does not follow your congenial avocation; your hands are white and his are red; yours are delicate and his are rude; but it is not the hand that you are saluting: it is the heart, for which Christ died. So speak kindly to him. "But," you say, "do you suppose I'm going to put myself on a level with a low-bred boy?" No, make yourself superior to him. Speak to him more kindly than any other man can. Be more sympathetic toward him than any other man can be. That is true aristocracy—the aristocracy of the heart.

The more God has blessed you, the more you need to go down.

When we are prospered, we tend to drift away from the great heart of humanity; we tend to get further and further from the lower range of sympathy, and we need to touch the ground again. It is necessary for a man's health that he should feel mother-earth every day. Dust you are, dust you came from, dust you will return to; and there is a lesson in dirt, if men will only choose the right kind, and use it in the right way.

Speak, then, to the man that takes ashes out of your house. Make him feel that somebody thinks of him, and that that somebody is you. And do not forget your seamstress, your servants, your driver. And do not think of them by these names. Do not think of people by the service-badge that they wear. The man that you call your driver, is not your driver: he is your brother-man. Driving is his function; but he is not a driver. We come to think of men by outside names, and not by inside substance and inside feeling. But this ought not to be so. And in proportion as men are poorer and obscurer than you are, be more particular to sympathize with them and to notice them.

I shall never forget a lesson that I received when walking down Pierrepont street one day. When this church was being built, I became acquainted with one of the carpenters—a plain man—who worked upon it; and I had many chats with him afterward. That day, being a Christian, (sometimes I am not one), when I met him, as he came down the street, I stopped and spoke to him, and shook hands with him. And giving me, as I noticed, a peculiar look, and keeping hold of my hand, he said, "Now, sir, you do not know how much good this does me." "What?" said I. "Well, your speaking to me, and shaking hands with me." Said he, "I shall go home to-night, and say to my wife, 'I met Mr. Beecher to-day.' 'Ah!' she will say, 'What did he say?' and the children will look up, too. And I will tell them, 'He stopped and shook hands with me, and asked if I was getting along well.' And they will talk about that for a week. You folks that live up here—" [In Pierrepont street they are all Christians, but they are not always as Christian as they might be]—"you folks that live up here [glancing around] have no idea how much good it does a plain man to be noticed, and to be made to feel that he is not a nobody."

I owe that man a good many sermons for that sermon which he preached to me.

Now, when you go over to New York, there is the ticket-man at the gate. He is your brother. And there is the engineer down in the bowels of the hold, if you see him. And there is the pilot. Nobody speaks to those pilots. In storm and in calm, they hold in

their hands the safety and the lives of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children; and they do it so skillfully, and so kindly, and so well, that you do not even think that they do it. And when I think of the vast amount of carriage of human freight which there is on our thoroughfares, instead of cursing the pilots and engineers for the occasional accidents which happen, I thank God that we have men who, in the main, are so able, so faithful, and so careful of this precious treasure which is committed to their trust. Is there a man in a cooper's-shop, in a tin-shop, or at an anvil, that is working for you? and do you think of him as you ought? Do you say that he gets his money? That does not pay him. No man is paid for service faithfully performed for you until you have coined something out of your heart to pay him with. Money does not reward service.

This spirit of real brotherhood should not confine itself to the household. It should go out from the family on to the street, and through all the avenues and vocations of life.

And do not forget little children. Of course children are loved in the families where they belong; and of course all sweet children on the street are liked. Who ever saw a doll-dressed child, with one of those bewitching little red sacques or hoods on, that did not want to catch it up and kiss it? But then, there are a great many children that are dressed raggedly. There are a great many children with bad eyes. There are a great many children that do not keep their faces clean. I do not admire the dirt, but they are *children;* and they need that somebody should make them feel self-respect; and if you snub them, if you curse them, who will take care of them? Their parents at home evidently do not do it, or are unable to do it. Be kind to children; and be kind to them in proportion as they are needy. If you take ragamuffins into your house; if on New Year's Day you make extra preparation, and let it be known, and the street boys all find out that there is a basket of oranges waiting for them, and they come, and you give them a warm welcome, you preach to them such a sermon as you cannot preach to them in any other way. They are not able to understand anything else so well as that. They will make you trouble; they will offend your taste; they will soil your carpets; they will do many things which your children would not do in your neighbor's house; but it is the misfortune of the ignorant that they do not know how to behave; and somebody must teach them. And while you speak to all a kind word, especially speak to those that need speaking to most.

I frequently see an irruption from Furman street on to Columbia Heights. We, you know, live on *Columbia Heights,* and what

business have these rough, stamping boys to invade aristocracy? They come up, ten, twelve of them at a time, and sweep the street of all the puny children that live there. And often they come with yells, and halloos, and rattling kettles, and all manner of disturbances. And we look up and down the street, and say, "Where is the policeman?"—for it is sometimes necessary to maintain order by appealing to the officers of the law. And yet, I say to myself, "I wish some of those boys were mine. What a physique! That head has substance in it! That head ought to go to Congress—I mean, to the Senate!" And as I look at them, I see a future in them. I see power in them. I see much to admire, as well as some things to deprecate, in them. And really, my heart turns toward the boys.

I would that this were the case more. I would that I were not so much dependent on moods. I would that my feelings did not depend so much upon sunshiny days and gloomy days. I would that I were not so much subject to introversion. I would that I were not so much absorbed by my occupation. But we are all infirm in these things. And yet, if we have this idea of brotherhood, and are seeking to carry it out, it is not a little.

Only one thing more—for I have protracted my remarks far beyond what I meant to. I wish that, in being gathered into the church of Christ here, you would all, old and young, remember that you are not coming among us as so many soldiers to be regimented and drilled into formal propriety. I cannot endure the thought that Christ's children should be less free, less joyful, less elastic, and less versatile, than anybody else. I want a Christian to be one that at heart is truly upright; but, more than this, I want that he should be one that shall go on with more amplitude of life, with more gayety, with more cheerfulness, with more happiness-producing power than anybody else in the community. I want that he should be one that shall put men to shame by well-doing. But, at the same time, let the eye blossom; let the mouth blossom; let the whole life be as blossoms and clusters that men shall take from you. I call you to a Christian life not merely to save your souls—though that is of transcendent interest, and though that should be regarded by a man as of most serious consideration, underlying the incontrovertible object of religion. I call you to a Christian life, not because God has a right to your services—though that is transcendent over all other motives, and should be more fruitful than any other. I call you to a Christian life for the sake of your fellow-men; that you may bear to them that which life needs so much—more gentleness, more ease in being entreated, more sweetness in love, more kindness in benevolence, more generosity, more condescension, more attention

to those that have no friends, and are out of the way. I call you to manifest the Spirit of Christ on the right, and on the left, and under all circumstances, so that men who see you shall say, "I know not whether that man is a Christian or not, but I know that he not only makes me better, but makes me happier." Make men so much happier that they will long to be better, and long to be able to make others happier.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Eternal God! thou art lifted above all the infirmities of time. Thou art not overcome with weariness; and thy strength never fails. Neither art thou tempted of evil. Thou dwellest far above all imperfections, and all shadow of turning; and in thine own infinite self thou art complete, and thou hast no need of counselors, and thou needest none to strengthen thine hand. Thou abidest forever. We perish before the moth; we are full of weakness; we are most ignorant, and know, often, least when we think that we know the most. What time thou turnest thine hand we perish. In thee we live, and move, and have our being, though we vaunt our own knowledge, our own skill, and our own preservative care. O Lord! look down with compassion upon thy creatures, filled with infirmities and with transgression. We have broken forth into sin out of infirmities. And we pray that thou wilt pardon all the wickedness of our hearts, and all the evil of our lives, and lift us up by thy strength into purity and knowledge, and quicken us in all fervor of goodness, that we may, all the days of our lives, live with open face toward the light of God, unrebuked and unreprovable.

We pray, O Lord! that thou wilt grant unto every one, according to his need, that grace which shall be efficacious to succor those that are in peril, to comfort those that are in grief, and to rebuke those that are wandering away selfishly from thee. Remind those that are breaking their covenant vows with thee. Grant, we pray thee, the visitation of thy comforting Spirit to all that are sad and cast down, by reason of thy dealings with them, on account of their own selfishness and imperfections and sins. And we pray O Lord! that, as a mother comforteth her child, thou wilt comfort those that sit in dreariness and are disconsolate. For thou knowest the heart. Thou hast the secret of comfort with thyself. Eternally joyful, and joy-bearing, thou seest how pain that ministers sharply fulfills thy will and mission. And we pray thee that pain may have its speedy work and accomplishment, and that out of suffering may come patience, and gentleness, and resignation, and sympathy, and kindness, and love. And we pray that thou wilt work in the hearts of all thy people, cleansing them from the defilement of the flesh, from the selfishness of life, from the strifes and passions that betide us, and prepare them for that nobler manhood, that better residence among the saints in heaven.

We pray that thou wilt draw near to every one in thy presence, and grant that the blessing of thy heart and thy spirit may be upon all. Hear the voice of those that would utter promises to thee. Hear those that re-

joice before thee, and would give thanks and speak thy praise. Grant thy blessings to those who are not here, but who are full of gratitude for thy preserving and restoring mercies. Hear those that desire this morning to praise thee in the great congregation, long absent and restored at last. Grant unto them, we beseech of thee, secretly, and in their very heart, a sense of thy presence, and a consciousness that thou dost receive their offer.

Be near to those that are in discouragement, and may they see the light of hope, and may they not despond. Though great may be their adversaries, and though great may be their sense of imperfection, may they yet have ministered to them such a sense of divine grace and providential care that they shall be able to rise above themselves as into the very presence and comfort of their Redeemer.

And we pray, O Lord! that thou wouldst be with those who would be here, and who sit in solitude with sad thoughts, or overburdened with care, or with suffering in sickness, or homesick and far away. And not only be with them, but, since to thee there is neither time nor space, since to thee all things are present and near, grant that the mercies that are descending upon us may widen, and may fall upon all whom we would have with us.

We pray, O Lord! that thy blessing may come this day unto thy churches. Let us not have thy presence, and thy power, and the joy of thy salvation, and others be unwet with the divine dew. Everywhere strengthen thy servants to speak thy word. Everywhere kindle in the hearts of thy people joyful worship.

And we pray not alone for the spread of the knowledge of Christ, but for the power of Christian love and faith. We beseech of thee that the times past may be sufficient. Grant that more and more, as the day approaches, we may see the tokens of thy coming for the emancipation of the world. Lift up the darkened nations. Pour twilight upon those that sit in the region and shadow of death. May those that preach the cross of Christ go forth in increasing companies, with more and more faith, and more and more success.

We pray that all the great events which are occurring, that all the discoveries which are being made in science, that all the efforts which are being put forth for the improvement and the welfare of mankind, may be sanctified by thy Spirit. And grant that we may not alone grow in outward estate, and in things material, but that we may become finer, and sweeter, and truer, and more just, and more noble.

And we pray that thou wilt fulfill all thy promises which respect thy Church, and which respect this whole world. And grant that the weary waiting of ages may at last cease, and that we may see the door of fulfillment standing wide open, and behold the heralds and angels coming forth to their rejoicing work of consummation.

Now, Lord, we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the services of this day. May all those that teach in Sabbath-schools and Bible-classes be able to teach out of their own hearts. May they have the spirit of God resting upon them. May all those that go forth to make known the Gospel to the wanderers, and to those that are the children of misfortune, and to those that are imprisoned, and to all that are without God and without hope in the world, go with the double Spirit of the Master; and grant that they may see of the fruit of their labor and not be discouraged.

And we pray for the elevation of morals in our cities. We pray for more wise laws, and for incorrupt magistrates. We pray that this whole nation, so signally blessed of God, may study justice more. Let not equity perish from our midst. More and more may men rise to nobler motives and to

purer lives. And grant that civilization may spread from this land to all the lands that sit in darkness. And have pity upon those who are in struggle and in suffering from the mighty waves of adversity that beat over them. And in due season raise them up, and restore them to prosperity and to greater wisdom than before. And we pray that thy kingdom may come, and that thy will may be done on earth as in heaven.

We ask these favors in the name of the Beloved, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, shall be praise evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, wilt thou add thy blessing to the word spoken. Forgive us all our sins. Heal us of our weaknesses. Strengthen in us things that are right and just and true. Open in us a fountain of pity. Open in us a perrennial fountain of benevolence and sympathy and good-will. And we pray that we may abound in these things so that the light of our life may be the joy of the unfortunate. May we be the comforters of the poor and needy, and so live as benefactors of men, that we shall be, at the last, thought meet to enter into the sympathy of the just made perfect in heaven. And unto thy name shall be the praise Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

THE AGES TO COME.

"That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus."—Eph. ii., 7.

The context is this:

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus."

You will observe how passionately anxious the apostle is to show that all that God did to Jesus Christ he did likewise to us. And as our elder brother, we are inseparable partners and brothers with him. When we were dead in sins, he quickened us together with Christ. Dead in body; but quickened by the power of God. Dead in sins; but quickened by the same power. Raised up together, and made to sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. Partnership, indissoluble union, is here indicated.

There is something very impressive and admirable in that long look ahead which distinguished the worthies of old. None ever lived so sympathetically in the present as they did. None ever lived so far away from the present, and so far ahead of it, as they did. They fed their souls upon the visions of ages to come. It was a triumphant forelooking in Moses that seems to have excited the apostle's admiration: "*who endured as seeing him who is invisible.*" It was that feature in the Saviour that attracted the eye of admiration: "*who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame.*" It was this forelooking to the sustenance which it brought, and the rest under disquietude which it gave, and the inspiration in the midst of despair which it ministered, that led the apostle otherwheres to say, "*Ye are saved by hope*"—not meaning that the active and justifying reason of salvation is that we are hopeful, but that in our warfare with the world we derive from hope such important help and inspiration that it may be said that without it we never could get along.

SUNDAY MORNING, April 30, 1871. LESSON: HEB. XII. 1—11; 22—25. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 725, 878, 1259.

The apostles seemed to regard their whole experience of the present as a mere hint, an earnest, a bond for a deed. Here, in this life, everything seemed to them but in its initial state, in its seminal stage. The harvest lay beyond, and a great way beyond, in the gathering of the church—in the whole future condition of the world, when nations should be righteous; when Christ should possess the whole earth. In looking forward to all those great elements they saw simply glimpses and hints of them. And they accepted the intimations of the present as so many tokens of something transcendently better, for which they were laboring, and for which they were waiting, but toward which they were traveling.

The glory of God's work cannot be found out on earth—this was their feeling. "In the ages to come" it will disclose itself. Now, rudeness and heartlessness and discord; but "in the ages to come," melody, the sweetest and most continuous. Now, collision, conflict, and suffering; but "in the ages to come," peace and joy unspeakable and full of glory. Now, all darkness; at times twilight at the best; but "in the ages to come," perfect light, perfect disclosure, perfect knowledge. Now, the rudiment; but then, when ages shall have passed, the full form.

1. We need just such a forelooking. The condition of the human race as it now exists is not a theme for pleasurable meditation. To those who believe in the moral government of God, and in the active administration of affairs in this world and in nature by the divine mind, the actual condition of the race seems utterly inexplicable. It is full of pain. The lowness of the average of intelligence and of social virtue, and the still lower average of spiritual conditions, fills the mind with amazement that God is Father. The greatest part of the world is but little redeemed from barbarism; and the development of the race from barbarism has been, within historic periods, coming on with extreme slowness. Indeed, what has been gained on one side, seems to have been lost on the other. It is true that more races are civilized than at any former period; but how many thousands of years have been expended! and how little of that time seems to have had addressed to it any active or apparently divinely-guided instruments of restraint! How little knowledge of the origin of men, how little knowledge of their own powers, how little knowledge of the laws of the globe on which they dwell, and how little knowledge of the principles on which their prosperity depends, has there been! How little has tended toward civilization, and how much toward animalism and superstition! How little has tended toward anything but brutality! Nations learn but very little, and that little they forget easily. The intellectual and the

moral faculties are certainly stronger to-day than ever they were before; they are stronger in a greater number; but the animal passions of the race do not seem to have lost any force. Nor do they seem to be under any greater control than they were a thousand or two thousand years ago.

Nor is it altogether a relief to us to leave the world to natural causes. That would be a relief if generations did not die, and if we did not have to account in some way for those that disappear from this life and re-appear in some other world. If annihilation met the incomplete manhood; if death rubbed out being, as the figures on a boy's slate are rubbed out where the sum is wrong, that it may be begun again, it would not be so mysterious nor so strange. But to suppose that through age after age, and age after age, almost without instruments, without schools, without churches, without a Bible, without missionaries, without ministers, without even the knowledge of the commonest principles of physical life, the race has been prolific, bubbling up enormously, and dying off, myriads and myriads and myriads pouring like a mighty tide into the great invisible world beyond—to contemplate that, and to see how the process is still going on—if that does not task one's faith, if that does not wring one's hope, or fear, as the case may be, I know not what can.

And it is to be remembered, too, that as we ourselves become imbued with the spirit of the Gospel we supply severer tests to civilization, and experience more revulsion from barbarism, and the marvel increases. As a light shines brighter and brighter in one place, so the darkness grows more and more impenetrable in every other place.

Therefore it is that we must believe, if we believe at all without explanation, that somehow "in the ages to come," when there is a new heaven and a new earth, righteousness will dwell in them. By what road we are coming to it, by what process the work shall be done, we cannot say. Ingenious suggestions may be made, and analogies may be pleaded; yet after all it is but fancy. All that we know is, that "in the ages to come" there is to be a new heaven and a new earth in which will dwell righteousness, and that there is meaning in the the mystic communication that Christ will take his power and come again to reign. If it be not the literal millennial glory which men have counted upon, it will be in some form the substance of which that is a sign and symbol. There is to be a view that shall cast light and glory on the track of nations and races; and the skepticism and animal conditions of the globe are not to continue for ever.

2. The condition of the church itself—all that which we are

wont to esteem as the best part of the church—the most favored, the most enlightened, the most cultured—leads one to rebound from the present, and to seek comfort in looking into "the ages to come." The church of the future—we hear much of it; and the less it resembles the church of the present, I think, the more we shall like it, and the more we shall be comforted by it. For the church of the present evidently is a church of sinful men not yet sanctified. It is the assembling together of the sick, although they may be convalescent. We should not seek beauty in hospitals; and as long as pride and selfishness are what they now are, as long as the spirit of evil so largely baffles the work of grace—so long the church, comprehensively viewed, will be rather a hospital than a mansion or a household of beauty. Single groups here and there comfort the eye. We see in villages and towns, and sometimes in large districts, Christian men living in such a way as to throw light upon all the community, and raise the tone of conscience, and promote civilization. Nevertheless, looking at the church the world over, it is a great army divided against itself, filled with seams, filled with imperfections, careless of the highest things, careful of things almost inconsequential, very slow in progress, given up largely to externalities, twined about with superstitions without real worship, standing fiercely and cruelly for things without value, and with an average of piety that is exceedingly low. "The ages to come,"—we must look into them, if we would comfort ourselves and be kept from despondency when we look into the time that now is. When there shall be no Oriental church and no Occidental church; when neither Greece nor Rome shall give their name to the collective people of God; when the church shall not be divided up into sects warring with each other, and hating each other, and almost wreaking cruelty upon one another—then, in "the ages to come," the household of faith will be built beautifully, and God will dwell with his people, and they shall be like him. We look away from the real and into the ideal, and build, every one as seemeth to him best, the vision of the new state of glory when love shall be the public sentiment of the church, and the wisdom of the church shall be that which springs from the heart of love.

3. Our knowledge of God in the present state of things, with all that has been done to winnow the wheat from the chaff, is exceedingly incomplete and unsatisfying. Our knowledge of the divine nature is unlike the knowledge of the qualities of matter which may be discerned by the use of our senses. God cannot be learned by any process of observation; nor can his kingdom be studied by scientific methods. As is declared, "The kingdom of

God cometh not with observation." A knowledge of the divine nature is not a thing to be demonstrated by scientific tests. It depends upon growth in us. We cannot understand in God anything of which we have not something in ourselves that stands for a suggestion, an analogue, and of which we have not had a parallel experience. How far can we understand God? As far as we are developed in spiritual directions. How is it possible for us to come to any considerable understanding of God, who is, after all, to us but a Being somewhat greater than good beings whom we have known upon earth? How much can we convey of our nature and of our modes of government to the intelligent creatures that are below us?—for there are creatures below us who understand many things. How much could we make the horse, the dog, or the elephant, understand, either of our dispositions, or of the motives from which we work, or of the structure and nature of our minds, or of the processes of society, or of the civil government which we are carrying on? You could not make them understand these things, because they have not the development, the faculty, that makes the meaning plain to them. The beings below us cannot understand us because they are not sufficiently unfolded.

And is it not so as between us and a superior Intelligence? There is not that in us which can understand God. Parts of his ways, and these the lower parts, we understand; but the distance between us and the Eternal Father is greater than the distance between us and the more intelligent animals below us. And doubtless, the same reason prevails in both directions. Growth is the only interpretation of God which will reveal him to us. It cannot be done by the blazing light. It cannot be done by any formula of words. It cannot be done by any symbolism of nature. All these things may help a little; but none of them are full interpretations, which can come only by the evolution of that which is in us, and which we are. They must be reserved for "the ages to come." It will not be here.

Now, our God is as a brilliant star, too far off for measurement; but bright, we know, and perfect, we know. The fact of his existence we know; but little else do we know concerning him. "In the ages to come" we shall see him as *he is*. Now we see him as *we are*. We make up our God very much out of the materials which we have in ourselves. There is not a question that the conception which a person has of God is largely an ideal made up out of his own experience; out of his own imagination; out of his own constructive reason. It must be so. We cannot do better. Nevertheless, the very best that we can do is still so imperfect that we do

not see Him as he is. Admit that God is perfect wisdom; but how much do we know of perfect wisdom? Admit that he is infinitely just; but how imperfect is our conception of justice! Admit that he is perfectly benevolent; but who understands the realm of benevolence? Admit that he is impartial, and that he is infinite in capacity in every direction; what are these but words? Who of us has any realizing center to such conceptions? We have never seen him. Nor can we see him and live—or while we are living. It is not given to the body to do it. And if we attempt, as we must, as the very best thing we can do, out of our own limited understanding of mercy, and gentleness, and pity, and love, and self-denial and compassion, to conceive of the character of God, it may transcend the heathen deities, it may at times, under the flashing acumination of our imaginations, touched by his Spirit, kindle to a sacred glow. But, after all, when we shall see him as he is, not the first rude daubs of the incipient artist will seem so rude, when the master-artist has found his skill, as our earliest conceptions of God will seem when, "in the ages to come," we shall see Him as he is, no longer as through a glass darkly, no longer as the vision of our own imagination, no longer as the imperfect work of our reason, but in all the amplitude and fullness of the real Being, and when we are so developed that we are able to behold and still to live.

We see on every side how many analogies of this there are. We see how impossible it is for beings to conceive of things that are far along beyond them in the way of development. Who, for instance, that was created with mature power, but had never lived to gather experience, could to-day form the slightest forecast of next October? Who could tell the color of the Autumn from the first growths and germs of the Spring? Imagine an Esquimaux striving to form some idea of the tropics from the missionary's description. What has he to form an idea from but the moss and stinted shrubs that scarcely grow higher than his feet, and the flowers that blossom in the midst of northern glaciers? Would he form a conception of the brilliant fruits of the tropics? He must grub the ground for berries, which are all the fruit that the frigid zone knows. And from the creeping vine of the wintergreen-berries, from the huckleberries, and such like things, he is to form his ideal of those magnificent parasitic plants which fill the tropical forests. These little berries are his oranges and bananas and pine-apples. He attempts, shivering in the midsummer, under the iceberg, to form a conception of the everlasting pomp and glory of the equatorial region. And when he has formed a conception of it, he cheers himself, and sighs, and wishes he could see it. Oh! it is so beautiful in his imagination!

But what does he know of it? What is an Esquimaux' ideal of equatorial glory? The reality transcends unspeakably any conception which he can form.

And that which is to be revealed to you, "in the ages to come," when you shall have left these mortal bodies, when you shall have experienced the sensations of the new life, when you shall have unfolded and come into the realm where things are no longer symbols but realities; when the physical shall have ceased, and the spiritual shall have been ushered in—that will surpass any ideal that your highest imagination has ever pictured.

4. "The ages to come" will reveal a personal experience in us of which now we have but the very faintest trace in analogy. We cannot at present form a conception of perfection in the elements which constitute character. You never can tell what the ripe is from looking at the green. If an unknown seed be brought to you, and you plant it in the ground, and it sprout, and grow for five years, only throwing out leaves, and for five years more, still only throwing out leaves, can you tell how its blossoms are going to look? You never saw them. The tree is a new one. You have seen the root, the leaves, and the bark, and you have cut into the wood; you know its habits for the first ten years; you know when its leaves appear in the Spring, and when they fall off in the Autumn; you know everything about it as far as it has gone during those ten years; but you cannot guess whether its blossoms are white or yellow. You cannot tell whether they will hang in racemes, or rise up in circles. You cannot tell whether they will stand out in spikes, or be pendant. You cannot tell whether they will be early or late. You cannot, if the shrub or tree be unknown, find out the prophecy of the blossoms.

But at last the blossom comes out. Now tell me what that blossom is going to produce. Look at it. Is it going to put forth a pod, or is it going to be a fruit? Is it going to be a seed, or luscious food? You cannot tell from a blossom what the fruit is going to be, except by analogues; and I am now supposing a new plant of which there has been no congener within your knowledge, and that you are attempting, from a lower state, to conceive of the higher.

Now, in regard to human beings, there is nothing in the unripe state of the mind which is a fair interpretation of what ripeness in it is going to be. You could never have told, except by seeing it, what the human reason was competent to do. Consider the force of reason, by which the whole physical universe is being now unbarred; by which the most distant orbs are being searched, weighed, analyzed; by which we are unwrapping the sun, and taking off coat after coat; by which we know more about the sun itself than often-

times men do of the province in which they live on earth. What an education! What an outstretch of thought! What development of the reasoning, searching power of the mind! Who could have suspected it in the days of barbarism? No man could then have told that. And who now can foretell what new development the human reason is capable of? As from the lower stages you could not suspect the higher, so from the present stages you cannot anticipate those which are yet to come. Now we think; but in the higher forms of thinking there is the intuition, the jump, as it were, the flash of thought, with which our present thinking is not to be compared. We call it *intuition*, we call it *inspiration*, we call it names; but names are not things. There is evidently the hint of a wondrous disclosure of power in the direction of reason "in the ages to come." We do not see it here. We cannot know it. We can only know what is the perpetual suggestion of it. Says the apostle St. John:

"We are the sons of God; but it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

We are God's sons; but the fullness of that word *sons* is not translated to us. The condition in which we are is such as to make it impossible for us wisely and fully to forecast the future.

Who, for instance, can tell what the difference will be to him when he shall drop the body, with all its appetites and passions? How much of that which is sin in us now is from the excesses of the driving forces of the appetites! Many a man is like a very small boat with a very large engine which racks it all to pieces with its power; and many a man is like a very large boat with a very small engine, so that its motion is feeble and sluggish, because the engine cannot generate enough power to propel it. Some men are over-bodied, and some are under-bodied. Some are over-excitable, and some are under-excitable. There is every conceivable variation in men. It is a matter which seems to follow no law of volition, and no law of nature, and no law of science. And it is a matter about which we are never consulted. We find ourselves set afloat in time with all sorts of craft—some broad and some narrow; some sharp-bowed and some blunt-bowed; some with sails, and some with engines; and some with little help of any kind. And thus equipped every man is to solve the problem of life. Every man is to take his own structure as God has given it to him, and work out true manhood. Every man is to make his own special condition the point of starting and measuring.

Who can conceive what it will be to be set free from all these things, so that the sluggish temperament is dropped; so that the fiery temperament is dropped; so that the intense energy in this or that passional direction has ceased; so that there shall be, as

when a whirlwind has passed, a calm, and there shall be no swaying, as the mighty winds sway the groaning trees; so that there shall be quiet in every bodily inducement to evil? Who can imagine how one will feel under such circumstances? Who can form any idea of what will become of what is left of him? Who can judge of the power to which his reason might have attained, or of the height to which his moral sentiments and affections might have mounted up, if it had not been for cumbering animalism; if it had not been for the fiery temptations which come from fighting instincts; from over-eating and over-drinking; from physical impulsions? We cannot arrive at any notion of how we should feel if we were emancipated from these lower propensities.

Suppose you were to wake up to-morrow morning without being proud, do you know how it would feel? Suppose you were to wake up to-morrow morning not obstinate but easy to be entreated, can you imagine what sort of a creature you would be? Suppose you were to wake up to-morrow morning with the spirit of avarice taken out of you, so that you were not over desirous to gain wealth, but were desirous of being just in your dealings with your fellow-men, can you imagine such a thing? We are always full of sickness; and it is hard for the sick to remember how they felt when they were well, or to realize how they shall feel when they are restored to life again. But "in the ages to come" we shall neither be helped nor hindered by the cumbrances of these mortal bodies.

Some believe that this mortal body rises again. Thank God! not I. I have had enough of it. And when once the earth takes it, let it keep it. The tree is welcome to what of me it can get, so far as the body is concerned. Says the apostle:

"There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

Good-by, old flesh and blood. I am bound for God's kingdom without flesh and blood; and what it will be to be without them, I cannot tell; but I know it will be magnificent—never tiring any more, unwearied and unweariable, with nothing to hinder, and everything to help. Is it needful that one should sleep and wake? Is it needful that one should waste half his precious time in sleeping and eating? Is it needful that more than one half of our being should be dedicated to the animal life? Is it needful that there should be but half or a third of our time available for the immortal? However it may be in the present, "in the ages to come," over the mountains, across the valleys, behind the clouds, beyond all calculable periods, there will be a state in which we shall have dropped this natural body, and in which we shall be endued with our spirit-

ual body, whatever that is, and shall be free from the circumscription and weariness of this mortal condition. Who can tell how he will seem, or how he will be, then? Besides, there will be the presence of things which are not known now and here. He shall be surrounded with influences of which we know nothing, but which grow out of the perfected state. We shall be surrounded by a society such as the apostle speaks of:

"Ye are come . . . to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, . . and to the spirits of just men made perfect."

What would it be to live for a single year in society where every thought, and every look, and every word, and every act, and every suggestion was lifting you higher, and ennobling you? As we live among men, we are perpetually weighing them; we are all the time parrying with them; we are forever defending ourselves against them. We are continually running backward and forward in life. Though we are friends to each other, yet we are more or less hindrances one to another. We are throwing off this and shutting ourselves up against that influence which our fellow-men exert upon us. We are incessantly dodging and eluding each other, as well as helping each other. And who can conceive of that state in which every eye shall shine on him like a star; in which every heart shall impress itself on his heart, and make it better, and give it an impulse in the right direction, so that every being shall imprint on him some glorious aspect; so that as every plant in a garden, though all be united, is beautiful in its own way, so every single creature of the whole realm, lifted into the highest state, shall bring balm and sweetness to every other one? Now, we are hindered, not only, but we are oppressed by each other—by even the well-meaning. And what shall that condition be in which everybody shall help, and everything shall help, and all hindrances shall be gone, and sorrowing and sighing shall have passed away, and singing shall have taken its place, and God shall wipe the tears from every eye!

What can you conceive of the connections which we shall form there in this new society, when friendship shall be purified from all its lower forms and selfishness shall have nothing to do with it, when there shall be no discrepancy between our reason and our conscience, and when we shall be perfectly harmonious?

If fifty men in Bedlam, each having a separate instrument of music, should play on that instrument—one playing his trumpet, another screeching his hautboy, another beating his drum, another playing his fiddle, and others playing their various instruments—each in his own way, and without any reference to the others, who,

going by, could form any idea of what would come from those instruments if every one of these men, having got back to his reason, was playing in perfect harmony and in a sweet concord? The hideous cacophony, the din and the jar, of such a Bedlamite band—would it not be very much like the play of our affections and feelings—sweet instruments, but played in horrible dissonance? And what shall that state be in which God shall make the whole of them to be united sympathetically, and all of them to be played together in unison—every power, every emotion, every instinct of love, sweetened, deepened, broadened, inspired, rendered divine by the presence of God? But this is for "the ages to come."

A hopeful, a joyful imagination of "the ages to come," should be encouraged, though it may be full of fancy and inaccurate—as it will be. For we do not pretend that any man can limn this picture. We do not pretend that any man is entitled to say that his view is any more correct than the views of others. But after all, the main defect of fore-looking into "the ages to come," will be deficiency rather than exaggeration. Our mistake will be, not in making reason too full, but in its meagreness; not in making purity too resplendent, but too tame; not in making joy too great, but too little; not in making things better than they are, but in not knowing how to make them good enough. We are not in any danger of exaggerating, so far as our conception of the future state is concerned.

"We are the sons of God."

There are your figures to cipher with.

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

No man can cipher out that result. It will transcend any image that you make of it. Draw from the heavens; draw from all that there is on earth; draw what you can through the channels of inspiration and of revelation; collect and cluster together the things which men have agreed to consider most admirable; and from these form pictorial parables of the City with its golden streets, with its gates of pearl, with its walls of precious stones, with its beautiful gardens, with its flowing rivers, and with its trees whose leaves are for the healing of the nations; picture as you may the future state from oriental conditions, or from the household, or the commonwealth as they now exist; from any and all of these form your conception of it; form your conception of it in any way that you please; but remember that when you have made it just as bright as your imagination can sketch it, when your fancy, architecturally, has wrought it as skillfully as it can, and everything has been carried to the highest pitch that your earthly power will allow, your conception will yet

be imperfect. For the sweet apostle, looking upon you as a father upon his children, says,

"It doth not yet appear."

You have gathered from the cradle purity of idea, and clasp and cling of faith; you have gathered from rich companionship what is the thrill and the joy of the higher life; you have gathered from the patriarch and the matron—saints not yet gone home to glory—dignity and patience, and all that makes generosity and magnanimity; you have gathered your best fruits, and fashioned them into single characters, and into ranks, and into communities, and into nations; and you have combined all these things in your conception of the resplendent throne of the All-Father. And yet, saith the sweet apostle again,

"It doth not yet appear."

Certainly not, brethren. And if you still add nation after nation, and age after age, to that conception, it will still fall short of what the future is to reveal of the goodness of God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

I will not open the subject further, but will close with one or two applications.

How much better it is, then, to live by faith, than it is to live by sight!—and you will see that, by *faith*, I mean a sanctified imagination, or the imagination applied to spiritual things. I suppose that to be the generic definition of *faith*. That which a man sees in this world is not to be compared for beauty nor for comfort with the things which he can imagine. Merely worldly men look upon things as they are. They must, in so far as business is concerned. The nearer men can come to things as they are, the better workmen they will be, and the better it will be for the transaction of purely secular affairs. But our truest manhood is not in the administration of material things. Our highest nature does not lie merely in the exactitudes of physical elements. We are to have an eye that looks beyond what the mere natural man has known. The spiritual man sees all that the natural man sees, and then sees much besides. It is sad to see how the average of men live in this world. It is sad to see how little they have, and how little they can do; how much there is of desire, and how little there is of satisfaction. It is sad to see how men yearn for happiness, and how seldom they gain it. Joy comes mostly in childhood. Then comes the tug. The bright side of life disappears, pride is humbled, and often grows malignant. Health breaks down. Expectations are overwhelmed. The malign passions rise and dominate over the higher faculties. The average of men live on a very low allowance of enjoyment. They live in

the literal present; and that is very poor. First, they are buoyed up by hope. Then comes anxious expectation. Then they wrestle with disappointment and despondency. And at last they are reduced to the worst straits. And they lose the respect of their fellowmen; and are kicked about in society; and some day it is said of them, "He is dead;" and men say, "Ah!" And that is the end.

One of the most piteous of things is to see how men live. I do not mean barbarians. I mean intelligent men. I mean men brought up by much care and culture. The world is piteous to live in if this is the only world. If there is nothing but what is here, I do not wonder that the aspiring mind cries out, "We are of all men most miserable." But a Christian man, under precisely the same circumstances, has a ground transcendently higher. For if there be nothing for him that suits his ambition, or his yearnings, or his wants, here, he has the land beyond. He knows that he is but a stranger and pilgrim; and he comforts himself, as he goes through the wilderness, thinking of the home toward which he is traveling. And he weaves tapestries, and paints pictures, and carves various creations. Living, as he does, by faith, and not merely by sight, his imagining, his picture-painting, his idealizing, his holy revery, is filling the great empty heavens with all conceivable beauty. And what if it be evanescent? So is the wondrous frost-picture on the window; but is it not beautiful, and worth having? So is the summer dew upon the flower; but is it not renewed night by night? And faith is given to man to lift him above the carnal, the dull, the sodden, and to enable him to conceive of things beyond that to which any earthly realization has yet ever attained.

So contrast the difference between going through life on the part of one who has this sense of "the ages to come," and on the part of one who lives only on the horizon of this world. Men who are bound up in this world do not like to think of the future. Men do not like to think of growing old. There comes, almost always, a shock the first time a man finds that his keel grates; the first time he finds that the stream is growing shallower; when he first discovers that there are white hairs upon his head; the first time it fairly comes to him, "Your eyes are giving out;" the first time some not irreverent but inconsiderate person says, "Get out of the way, old man," and he looks around and sees that it is he himself that is being addressed.

I once heard a person say, "I *hate* to grow old." But he was shoved along every day, notwithstanding. He *had* to grow old. The teeth showed it; the hair showed it; the eye showed it; the ear

showed it; every sense showed it. The old tabernacle could not stand the wind and the water that were forever beating upon it and battering it.

But hear Paul say,

"We know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Hear the Master say,

"In my Father's house are many mansions" [apartments.] "I go to prepare a place for you."

A man who believes and takes in the meaning of these declarations, receives the knocks and ill-fortune of life, and says to every wind that shakes his earthly house, "Blow! My real house is not touched by any earth-storm." To every infelicity, every circumscription, and every other token of weakness that comes with growing old, he says, "You have very nearly run out, and I hunger for 'the ages to come.'"

The spiritual man is giving up physical things all the time, and is getting more and more, clear down to the end. But it is just the other way with the natural man. He is all the time trying to hold on to things that are material, and is getting less and less, clear down to the end. The man who lives simply for this world and for his senses, the literal man, is living out his patrimony. He is spending all he has. His pockets grow shallower and shallower. The nerve becomes duller and duller. The eye can no longer see such things as it once did. The ear can no longer hear such pleasant sounds as it has heard. But it is not so with a man that is living by faith. He never hears so much as when he begins to hear nothing. Milton said, in substance, that God shut his eyes that he might shine upon him with the higher light of his own Spirit. To him blindness was not darkness, but that twilight which came upon him from a higher realm. For when this outward body decays, the mind does not decay with it. The apostle puts it in strong antithesis:

"Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

And, not only that, it grows more and more vivid and intense.

So, the old miser takes care of his wealth, but he cannot help thinking who will have his money. It cannot be many months before he will have to go and leave it; but he does not like to think of such a thing. Next to him, right by the side of his abundance, may be a Christian pauper starving. And in his suffering he says, "Thank God! I am almost home, where my treasure is, and where I shall hunger no more, and have no more care and trouble."

He that is living by the body is living out everything. He is

like a candle that is burning down in the socket. But he that is living in the spirit, is living toward everything—toward hope, toward joy, toward fullness, toward refinement, toward elevation, toward grandeur.

When that venerable and dear old man, my father, for a year was without the knowledge of himself, it was to me the most piteous, the most utterly unbearable of all earthly spectacles, unrelieved but by this single thought—"Old patriarch, your light has not gone out. It is merely obscured by some film of the flesh. It shall not be quenched. And ere long the blow shall come that shall break this casket, and let it out. You are grander than you ever were, and nearer to royalty, always royal."

They that live to the flesh are living crumbling lives, and are going toward dissolution all the time. It is only they who live the life of faith, by the imagination, in holy things, that have before them "the ages to come." They are those who live toward happiness, singing more and more, rejoicing more and more, the circles and the waves of their experience running with wider and wider sweep.

When we see men that are old and infirm, we sometimes say, "They look like disbranched trees"; but if God were to touch our eyes, and reveal to us the companies of angels that surround such venerable, waiting saints, we should never think that they were solitary, or impoverished, or to be pitied.

I love to think, also, in this view, that what seems to be the mystery of the silence of death, which envelops so many that we loved on earth, is not really a mystery. Our friends are separated from us because they are lifted higher than our faculties can go. Our child dies. It is the last that we can see of him here. He is lifted so far above us that we cannot follow him. He was our child; he was cradled in our arms; he clambered upon our knees. But instantly, in the twinkling of an eye, God took him, and lifted him up into his own sphere. And we see him not. But it is because we are not yet developed enough. We cannot see things spiritual with carnal eyes. But they who have walked with us here, who have gone beyond us, and whom we cannot see, are still ours. They are more ours than they ever were before. We cannot commune with them as we once could, because they are infinitely lifted above those conditions in which we are able to commune. We remain here, and are subject to the laws of this realm. They have gone where they speak a higher language and live in a higher sphere. But this silence is not the silence of vacuity, and this mystery is not the mystery of darkness and death. Theirs is the glory; ours is the waiting

for it. Theirs is the realization; ours is the hoping for it. Theirs is the perfection; ours is the immaturity striving to be ripe. And when the day comes that we shall disappear from these earthly scenes, we shall be joined to them again: not as we were—for we shall not then be as we were—but as they are, with God. We shall be like them and him.

And so, even in respect to the things that the heart holds dearest, and that we are called to give up, we are not gloomy and sad. For, as we go on down toward the end of life, and one after another is taken away from us, these "ages to come" are the breast of consolation to us. And we look toward them. We look away from the trite, and flat, and dreary monotony of the present; we look away from its storms; we look away from the oppressive heat of its Summer, and the bitter cold of its Winter; we look away from its temptations and trials; we look away from the things as they are, to that blessed time, ages from now, in which there shall be perfect thought, perfect feeling, perfect association, and perfect knowledge of God, knowing as we are known, and in which we shall go on forever and forever, blessed and blessing.

"God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our heavenly Father, we thank thee that thou hast made thyself familiar with us. Not that we understand thee, whose greatness surpasses all thought, and the richness of whose being transcends any experience that we know upon earth; but thou hast been pleased to liken thyself unto things familiar, and to call thyself Father, and to teach us to say, Our Father which art in heaven. We are thine, and thou art ours. Thou hast impressed us with thine all-comprehending love. Thou hast made us to feel what are the riches of thy being. Not only hast thou communicated to us by the world which is without, by the things which we behold in life around about us, but we have the witness of thy Spirit with ours. There is a voice inaudible to our outward sense—the voice of God in our soul. There is a divine presence in which is richness, and fullness of joy, and peace. Thou hast brought it near to us. We are witnesses of thy sustaining power, often, in circumstances of peril and of great trial. We have known thee when in solitude and in sorrow. We have felt thee in the midst of griefs and vehement afflictions. Thou hast come to us in the stirrings of fear. Thou hast drawn near to us in hours of great trouble, and manifested thyself to us as a God of peace and great mercy, forgiving iniquity and sin. And we rejoice that we have our heritage of experience in thee, and that with thy name has been associated much of our very life. And yet, how little of our nature hath gone toward thee! and how little of thine is explored or explorable by ours! How much in glorious reserve awaits our understanding, when we shall be born into spiritual things! Thou art far from us only because we are so small and so poor, and have known so little that interprets thee. And we rejoice that we are living toward the knowledge that yet shall be ours, and that thou hast in the future glorious and blessed things in store for those that serve thee faithfully unto the end. Grant that we may have convoying grace, that in all the perils of the way we may be surrounded by thy care. We commit our souls to thy keeping. To thee we commit all our worldly good—our friendships, our hopes, all the things for which our ambitions strive. And we desire that thou and thy righteous will should reign over all that we have, or hope to be.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt keep alive in us, and quicken, conscience, that we may be more and more desirous of things that are true and right; of things that are high and divine. May we be delivered from the power of the world in undue measure. May we be delivered from too great avarice for its affairs, for its joy, for its pleasure. And we pray that we may have more and more the eye that beholds the invisible, and the heart that rests in things to come.

We pray for those in thy presence who offer up their thanksgiving. Wilt thou be pleased, this morning, to accept their grateful thanks.

Draw near to those that fain would confess to thee their sin, this morning, the burden of which lies heavy upon them, or hangs as a cloud above them. Wilt thou give them release from fear. Wilt thou give them that quietness which they have whose sins are forgiven.

And we pray that thou wilt be with all who come to thee for rescue in peril, and for deliverance out of temptation, and for patience and strength under the trials which press upon them. Thou knowest altogether every heart.

We commend to thee, this morning, those who fain would supplicate thy presence and thy mercies. We beseech of thee that thou wilt draw near to all those who are sitting in sorrow, and can scarcely look up, or call to thee, though their afflictions are great. And although for the present it is gloomy

and sorrowful, bring to them, by and by, the pleasant fruits of righteousness. We pray that thou wilt uphold them, that their faith may not fail them.

Be near to those that are perplexed, whether it be concerning their household, concerning their worldly affairs, or concerning themselves. We pray that they may cast their burden on the Lord, and feel sustained by his presence and grace.

Draw near, we beseech of thee, to all those who are in the midst of life's battle. May they be girded with strength that is not their own, but thine. May they be able to turn aside temptation and the tempter. May they be able to acquit themselves like men.

And we pray, O Lord, our God! that thou wilt bless those who are laboring in word and in doctrine. May all that go forth to teach be themselves filled with the Holy Ghost. We pray that those who bear the tidings of truth to the scattered and the wandering may have the blessing of their Father evermore going with them. And may their souls be so full of the true spirit of the Gospel, that everywhere their words may win some. We thank thee that thy truth is not without power. We thank thee that those who labor in faith and in patience see of the travail of their souls. We thank thee that so many are from time to time turning away from evil, and learning the right path, and seeking to pursue the things that are noble and pure and right before God, and comely before men. May the truth be increased.

May those who are beginning a life reformed, a life upward and spiritual, not be discouraged nor overborne. And if they stumble, may they not be destroyed. Lift thou them up, and carry them unto the end.

And we pray for the rescue of the outcasts; of all that are in thrall; of all that fain would break away from passions; of all that are ensnared in their own sins. We pray, O Lord, Redeemer and Deliverer! that thou wilt send rescue to them.

Remember any that are backslidden; any that have known thee, and that are following but afar off, almost out of sight and light and warmth. Bring them near again to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls; and restore to them the joys of thy salvation.

We pray for the young, that they may grow up uncontaminated; that they may grow up valiant for the truth, and with a feeling of honor for things that are pure and right. We pray that they may be delivered from those that would destroy them. May the generation that is rising serve God and their country better than the generation which is passing away.

Cleanse the laws of this land, and all its customs. Grant that the magistracy may be everywhere God-fearing. Be pleased to bless the President of these United States, and those that are associated in counsel with him, and the members of the General Government, and of the Governments of the States. We pray, O Lord! that thou wilt grant unto them that guidance of thy wisdom which shall keep them from mistake and all harm.

Deliver this nation from intestine feuds, and from bitterness. And grant that justice and intelligence and virtue may thrive, and that on these a glorious perfection may be developed.

We pray for the nations of the earth—for those that are drinking blood. Let the cup pass speedily. O Lord! let not the iron heel of war forever dominate over the weak and the poor. Grant that at last thy banner may be lifted up, white, spotless, and peace prevail in all the earth. And may justice strengthen it and preserve it, and all the nations see thy salvation. We ask it for Christ Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

THE TWO REVELATIONS.

"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel." Rom. II., 14–16.

The "law" here spoken of was the Mosaic law, unquestionably. To the Jews the term *law* conveyed about the same meaning which to us the word *Bible* does. It was their Book; or, it presented itself to their mind as the inscribed and recorded sum of their religious faith and observances, just as the Bible stands before us as the Book of our faith, and the Guide and Directory of our lives and dispositions.

The apostle argues that the law—that is, the Jewish Bible—existed, in regard to its essential elements, outside of itself, if I may so express it; that the great truths which it embodied did not exist for the first time in the Old Testament Scripture, and were not created for it, but that they were founded in nature—so much so that when men had no access to the law, they went on (the better portion, the more intelligent and enlightened, of them), seeking after the very same ends, in the path of the very same truths that the Jew did by his Scripture. And the teaching of the apostle is, that although the light was paler, and the path more obscure, it was substantially the same path and the same light, after all.

The Gentiles—that is, the great nations of the world outside of Jewry—were also seeking for truth; for honor; for justice; for fidelity; for reformations from evil; for higher spiritual development; for more insight. They were men full of noble aspirations. North of them, east of them, north-east of them, all the way along the Mediterranean coast, there were men of great mental stature and high genius, and not deficient in moral sentiments, all seeking, though blindly, or rather in a twilight, the same great ends.

Now, the apostle says,

"When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things

SUNDAY EVENING, April 23, 1871. LESSON: MATT. V., 3–16. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 687, 849, 78.

contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another [their moral consciousness condemning them or approving them.]"

And thus he identifies the subject-matter of the Old Testament Scripture with the truths which God has revealed in nature.

In other words, the truths of the Old Testament belong to the nature of things. They are organic. They are fundamental. If you go through the Bible you shall find them there; and if you go down to the bottom of things you shall find them there. They are a part of the constitution of nature. They are not found in nature because the Bible put them there; but they are found in the Bible because they were in nature first.

This was certainly the method by which our Master taught. The union of two striking peculiarities was found in the Saviour. One was a quiet compliance with the whole custom and worship of his time. He was a thorough Jew in his religious habits. He kept Jewish days. He observed the Jewish ceremonies. He frequented the temple. He was devout. He recognized the festivals. He worshiped in the synagogue. We find him continually taking part in the synagogue worship. And we do not find that, by word or deed, he set aside any part of the national worship. Yet you shall not find an instance in which he intensified or ratified truth by reference to custom, or by founding it at all on precedent. On the other hand, the appeal of Christ was always to reason, and to that part of reason which we call *moral consciousness*. He based his instruction, not upon the venerableness of precedent, nor upon the claims of antiquity, nor upon the wisdom of observing the customs which had been prevalent, nor even upon the commands of Scripture; but upon this: IT IS TRUE, AND THEREFORE IT IS RIGHT. He urged men from considerations that went back of external revelation, and beneath it; that went to the sources from which revelation itself sprang. And it may be said that all the great truths of the Word of God are true whether the Bible is believed in or not. But more of that further on.

It will be found, therefore, that the foundation principles of Christianity rest in the nature of things. Christianity is not only not in antagonism to nature (cursed be he that makes it seem so), but is coincident with it. It is not in antagonism, in any of its parts, with nature. It is not, either, a super-addition to nature. Christianity is nature itself, and the best part of it—that part which relates to man's soul; that part which takes cognizance of the morality and the divine element in man. Christianity does not undertake to

help nature in the organization of the globe, nor in its moral laws, nor in its political economy, nor in ten thousand elements which are of transcendent importance. Christianity appropriates to itself simply the province of the divine and spiritual elements that are in man; and in respect to them, Christianity is a part of nature. Not only is Christianity not in conflict with nature, not only is it not an artificial thing which stands above nature, but it is an interpretation of that which is everlastingly true.

The great Bible truths, then, were not made by the Bible. They were not invented, they were not gotten up, for the sake of making a Bible. The principles of religion as taught in the Old Testament and in the New Testament were not framed and put together for the sake of making the canonical books. The Bible is an exposition of one side of nature: that is to say, the moral side of man's relation to God, to his fellow-men, and to his own destiny, here and hereafter. It is constructed out of the experiences of the best men, in their respective ages of the world. Holy men spake as they were moved by the Spirit of God; but they spoke about their experiences —about their trials, and the results of their trials; about their thoughts, and the results of their thinkings. God revealed truth to the world through the lives of men who formulated in their own minds great moral problems, and identified themselves therewith. And the results they were inspired to record and to teach. But if the Scripture were disowned, or if it were thrown away, it would not change the truth a whit—though your competency to find it out might be changed.

If a man in the night, by the light of a lamp, is trying to make out his chart, and there is storm in the heaven, and storm upon the sea, and some one knocks that lamp out of his hand, what is done? The storm is above, and the storm is below; and the chart lies dark, so that he cannot find it out—that is all. If it were daylight he could see the chart well enough; but there being no light, and the lamp on which he depended for light being knocked out of his hand, he cannot avail himself of that which is before him.

And the same is true concerning much of the Bible. It is an interpreter. It is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. And those truths which have their exposition in the Bible, and which are a revelation of the structure of the world, and of the divine nature and government, do not depend for their truth upon the Bible itself. They are only interpreted and made plain by it. If the world disbelieved Scripture, they would simply deprive themselves of moral eyesight. It would not change the great truths of God any more than the burning of all the scientific books in the world would

change the great physical laws—which science expounds, but does not create. Science does not depend on books. It is founded in the nature of things. Books are the means by which it is brought to our knowledge.

So, truth does not depend on the Bible. The Bible does not create it, but merely expounds it, brings it into practical shapes, and makes it usable to men. And such is the infinite wisdom and mercy of God, that if you should burn every Bible on the globe, though much knowledge of truth would be quenched, yet the world would not lose a single truth. For truths are organic. They spring from the way in which you and I are made, and are bred together in life. They belong to the nature of things. They were as true ages ago as they are now, though they were not then as available to men as they are now. And the truths contained in this guide, this directory, this exposition of moral truth, this Bible, can be found outside of it, either in principle or in fact. One of the best ways of studying the Word of God, is to compare it with the things of which it speaks. If we read in the Word of God of *rivers*, of *fruitful trees*, of *mountains*, of *cedars of Lebanon*, of the *oak*, of the *lily of the valley*, or of other things like these, we recognize at once the propriety of identifying and studying them outside of the Bible, and not inside of it. If it speaks of a *lion*, or a *behemoth*, or a *serpent*, we go to natural history to find out what these names mean. We study the nature of these animals; and then we go back to understand Scripture.

And now, if we go to the Word of God, and it speaks of man, and of his dispositions, his will, his choices, his tendencies, his character, the results of certain influences which are brought to bear upon him, we are then to go to nature itself, just as we do in these other cases, and study to ascertain what man is, what is his composition, what is the human will, how it is acted on, how it operates, and what is man's character, disposition and life. *Life* interprets the Bible, if one only knows how to study it. The everlasting round of human nature and human experience throws light upon the words and the passages of Scripture.

We are not, therefore, to take our interpretation of the Bible, and go out and refuse to see things as they are, and cramp life, and attempt to compress it into the space which that interpretation covers; but we are to give to truths in respect to men the same freedom that we give to truths with regard to lower physical things. And we are to find them out by going to nature, and by appropriate and judicious processes of study ascertaining what they are. Life itself is the best commentary on the Bible.

So, then, whatever you find to be true outside of the Bible, may measure, may interpret to you, that which is contained in the Bible. If you do not find that to be true in one which you find to be true in the other; if disagreements between the Bible and nature arise, they come from a wrong interpretation of the one, or of the other, or of both. And the history of the matter is this: that from the beginning, men, though they have interpreted the Bible according to their best light, have often interpreted it wrongly, until a better knowledge of the external world enabled them to take a better view.

When men found out that the earth moved around the sun, when the whole Copernican system was disclosed, there was a great uproar in the Christian world because the new astronomy would destroy the Bible. But after a while, either these revelations, or men's constructions of the Bible, gave way; and I need not tell you which gave way. When Rome made Galileo recant, she did not blot out the truth which he had brought to light.

We remember that when geological discoveries came in men were in alarm, and said, "What is to become of the first chapters of Genesis? Has the earth been created through such long periods of time as the depositions of rock and soil indicate? Why, the Bible says that on the first day God made so and so, and that on the second day he made so and so." They had the whole order of creation arranged like a case of drawers; and they could pull out one, and another, and another, with perfect regularity and precision. And when these disclosures of science began to be made, there was a great turmoil on the subject. But after a while men concluded that they would call "days," periods of time. And a day might be a thousand years, or a hundred thousand, or five hundred thousand. And they said, "Well, the Bible does not undertake to teach the science of geology at all. In Genesis, we find the order of creation stated; and that is in accordance with modern geological teachings; but as to 'days,' they were indefinite periods of time." And so biblical construction gave way, and not the revelations of God in science.

More recently, there has come up a school of men who are alarming proper-minded and sedate people in respect to the origin of man. We are finding out who our forefathers were. Lineage, you know, has always been a great thing in this world. Men have been eager to trace their ancestry. But there is a point where I think we shall all be willing to stop. There is a theory of the origin of man which it is not very agreeable to contemplate, and from which we naturally shrink. But if a thing be true outside of the Bible, you may depend upon it that it will show itself in spite of you. What God writes with the hand that made creation, he writes so that men

cannot rub it out. When once a seed has unfolded itself, you cannot throw back the blossom or the fruit to the condition from which it came. And when rocks and creatures have risen up and testified as to God's creative method, you cannot put back into its germ-state the witness which they bear.

You must make your interpretation of Scripture conform to the revelation of God in nature. I do not believe that they contradict each other. I believe that all the truths which are recognized in the Scriptures will be found to be susceptible of interpretations that are coincident with the essential facts of nature. And scientific disclosures, although they are at first disturbing, I believe to be the best commentators and the best illuminators of the truths of the Bible which God has ever sent into the world. Men, using their light in any age, construct, according to the spirit of that age, and according to their limited powers, fallible interpretations of the great scheme of truth which is contained in the Bible. Nature, as she unfolds more and more, makes commentaries upon those interpretations; and the commentaries stand. I think that by and by, when the disclosures that are being made of what is called the scheme of Evolution have come to their growth, so that we may know exactly what they are—I think that then one of the most striking things which ever came to pass, will be the admirable analogy with the great facts of nature and science which will be found in the Word of God. For, although there is much yet to be made known, it seems to me that all thinking men who have taken the trouble to inform themselves about these facts, believe in the theory of evolution, or the theory that the method by which God created the world and the races, consists in the development, the unfolding, of everything from some anterior and less perfect state. He would be a bold man, and, as I must think, a rash one, who would, at this stage of investigation, dogmatize on the subject of the Origin of Man. Although many of the later applications of the theory of Development require ripening, yet they foreshadow, I think, if not the very truth, yet the *direction* in which the truth lies. And we may as well prepare ourselves to accept it. For one, I am ready.

Let us, in this spirit, look, for one single moment, at the general drift of the Scripture-teaching by the side of the revelations which have been made, or are making, by science.

1. **As to the condition of mankind.** I recollect very well when the doctrine of total depravity, as founded in the essential animal condition of the race, excited great repugnance and horror among men who, as the result of hereditary endowments and long culture, had

come to a condition in which they felt more the impulse of the intellectual and spiritual than they did of the basilar and the animal. They felt it to be a very great reproach to say that men were depraved and wicked from the root, and always. But the Word of God still went on declaring, if it declared anything, that at the bottom there was an animal nature, fierce, intractable, unspiritual, without God, and without moral restraint. That has been the testimony of ages. And what is science now revealing? What if all the theories of Mr. Darwin, or half of them, shall be found true, will it not ratify the steadfast testimony of the whole Word of God as respects the essentially animal, secular, worldly nature of man? The Word of God has always borne this witness: that unless something sprouted out of the lower constitution and nature of man, and unfolded into a higher spiritual realm, true manhood would not be attained. And is it not the tenor of the theories and disclosures which are now occupying so much of the world's attention, that we spring from lower forms; that we go steadily up and up, higher and higher; that we are gradually unfolding; and that our true nature is not to be found in our far-back nature, but in our far-forward nature? Does not the Word of God bear witness, all the way through, to the essential availability and educability of man? Does it not teach that you can develop him out of lower forms into higher ones, and out of the natural state into the spiritual, saying that they who sow to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; that they who sow to the animal shall be animal; that they who sow to the passions and appetites shall have the misfortunes and sufferings which these forces of their nature yield, and that, on the other hand, they who sow to the Spirit shall inherit those blessings which come from the Spirit?

2. Consider what is the direction in which perfection lies. Is not nature bearing witness to the essential power of the reason, and to the real superiority of the moral constitution of man? Is there any difference in schools on that subject? Is not that the part of man which characterizes him, and distinguishes him from all the races below him? And is it not true that the progress of man has been made in that direction? Is there anything more clearly set forth than that, in the Word of God, from the earliest record to the latest? And has not that line of development and growth in Scripture been pointed out plainly and accurately by the pen of science?—only Scripture makes many statements that transcend anything which has yet been found out by science. For science, so far, has not attempted to show, or has not succeeded in showing, any connection between the thought and soul of man, and the inspiring power of the divine mind. I believe that by and by it will be demonstrated,

not only that there belongs to man a moral character and destiny, but that there is a divine power which meets him on his way up; and that it is by the stimulating and enlightening and renovating power of the divine mind that man is escaping from his animal condition, and working his way up to the higher state for which he is destined.

3. The Scriptures go still further, and teach that man will one day slough off the animal entirely, and leave that seed-form out of which he sprouted, and take on the blossom-form; or, that he will evolve a nature higher; and that the spirits of just men made perfect will live together. Is not this just the progress that we should expect, in close analogy with the scientific disclosures which have been made in regard to the development of mankind?

That is true, then, which I stated in the beginning, that the essential truths of Christianity will be found not merely in Scripture, but outside of it; and that they are not true because they are written there, that they are not true because the Bible says they are; but that they are contained in the Bible because they are true, and were true before they were recorded.

And that is how it comes to pass that this old Book, in which are gathered through thousands of years the experiences of men who stated the truth as it was made known to them in the several ages to which they belonged,—that this old Book, when in these later days, it is tried by the latest discoveries of scientific research, while the externals of it—what may be called the husk and shell—may be here and there peeled off, is in its great truths found to be coincident with these latest discoveries.

If this general view be authenticated by a further examination, I think that we may dismiss all fear, that we may pray for light and development, and that we may hail those honest and earnest investigators for the truth who are seeking to make known to men, from the disclosures of God's creation, what are the footsteps, what is the handiwork, what are the thoughts, and what are the methods of God in the history of the world.

I am sorry to have any antagonism between science and religion. I am sorry that scientific men should think it necessary to antagonize religion from their side; and still more do I grieve that Christian men should, from church reasons, think it necessary to antagonize science. I believe that both sides are working toward the same results, and that we ought to seek to keep peace between them. We can accept the deductions of science, and still maintain truth in regard to the destiny of mankind, and the regeneration of

the souls of men, through the influence of the Divine Spirit, with the co-operation of the human will.

More than that, those persons do not seem to me to be wise who, from any reason whatever—from the revulsion of disgust, or from perverse teachings, or from weariness, or from reaction of any kind—are disposed to throw the Bible aside, saying, "It was good enough for old times, but it does not answer for our day." We cannot afford to throw away the word of God. Many people say, "We have come to new times; we have come to a new inspiration; a new dispensation of truth is ushered in; and away with the old Bible!" Well, when we get the new light; when spiritualism has got its work all done; when there have been told us things deeper, things higher, things broader, things more cogent and more satisfying than those which are recorded in the simple and sublime sentences of the word of God, then it will be time enough to consider what is to be done with our fathers' Bible. I do not propose to throw it away merely on the *promise* of something better. I do not propose to throw it away simply on the pretention of something that claims to be superior to it. I do not expect ever to throw it away. A thousand years hence the Psalms of David and the words of Christ will be as fresh and fruitful as now.

I know there is that in the Scriptures which has grit to it. I know it by this token: not that wise men have written so much, but that here is a book which has gone through tempestuous ages, assailed, buffeted, cast hither and thither, and yet has retained the confidence of mankind because it has that in it which masters sorrow, takes hold of trouble, gives strength where there is weakness, and supplies an anchor to those who are tempest-tossed. There is that in the word of God which has held the world through troublous periods, which has kept men steadfast in the midst of trials and adversities, which supports the poor and the ignorant, taking hold of the fundamental wants of human nature with a power which no other literature and no other thing ever did.

Now, so long as it is full of breasts of consolation, let those who are in trouble nurse at it. If there is any better humanity, if there is any higher morality, if there is any deeper love, if there is any more potent disinterestedness, than the Bible reveals, I would like to know it. If anywhere there be a literature of the two worlds—of the present, and of the hereafter—that transcends that which is contained in the Bible, show it to me. I want the best and truest thing. But it seems to me that those who make haste to throw away their Bible, are throwing away their best good. It seems to me that those who leave their Bible unsounded, who leave its depths

unsearched, do not understand where their greatest treasure lies. And as to those impertinent persons, those little specimens of men, who would kick their Bible overboard, because they have found out, by reading in the corner of some newspaper, that the Scriptures are not true—I need not waste words on such bubbles, that break if you touch them.

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him."

What sort of a man is that of whom it may be said that a fool is more advantageous to the world than he is? And yet, how many men, how many little whipsters, there are, who never read a book of Scripture in their life, who never took the Bible according to its plan, as bread to satisfy hunger, water to quench thirst, using it as a staff to hold up their weight when they were weak, and using it as a medicine for their soul when it was sick—how many such persons there are, that in their blindness and presumption reject this blessed repository of that which the human heart most needs!

The Bible is never so true to me as when I am in trouble; it is never so true to me as when I am conscious of my weakness, and of the unsatisfying nature of everything that there is in this world. And hundreds of persons learn when brought into trouble to esteem it and lean upon it, who have despised it and thrown contempt upon it. Many a man who has cursed it has gone home from the burial of his companion, or the entombing of his child, disconsolate, and taken up his mother's old Book, and dropped silent tears as he read then for the first time, with an understanding heart, its comforting messages. There is some mysterious emanation or power that finds its way to the soul in reading the Scriptures under such circumstances; and how ill can any man afford to reject that which is such a balm in his sorest need!

Suppose you were to have an insurrection against doctors? Suppose, one by one, you should throw them out of the community? Suppose you should do the work so thoroughly that there should not be a shred left of these despotic men going round and telling people that they must take this, that, or the other hateful drug? Suppose you should not only send these men away, but burn their books and their medicine? When the doctors were gone, and the apothecary shops with all their contents were destroyed, and there was nothing left but neuralgia, and rheumatisms, and dropsies, and fevers, would you be any better off than you are now?

Here is God's medicine-book, full of wondrous remedies, full of blessed compounds, for the cure of the diseases of the human soul,

and you would get rid of it; you would throw it away; you would destroy it. But do you thus take away depravity? Do you cure unbelief? Do you remove the animal that is in you—the tiger, the bear, the monkey, the serpent, whose nature and spots appear here and there. Do you turn out all this cage full of unclean beasts that are in the heart, when you cast the Bible from you? Oh no, you only turn out their keepers. These that have had the power of restraining and controlling the fierce animals that ramp and rage within you, you put out of the way; but the animals themselves remain to torment you still? You have given up the Bible; but the evils which it was sent to cure—the crying need, the down-sagging trouble, the yearning aspiration, the lifting up of the soul when touched by the divine light and influence—where is your solution and your help for these?

In the word of God we have what we need. Ten thousand times ten thousand trusting souls have followed its directions, and found them to be true, and rejoiced in them. The drunkard has been led to give up his cup by the influence which has been brought to bear upon him through the Bible. The Bible has been instrumental in reclaiming the thief. Lusts have been cured by it. Strong worldly ambitions have been overcome by it. Pride has been softened by it. It has clothed the hard and rugged sides of life with blossoming vines of beauty. And the world to-day is a witness of the power of the word of God. We see on every hand evidences of its ability to comfort and console and bless. Oh, how many are dying and have died in the faith of the word of God!

And how full of blessed associations this dear Book is!

I walked through the old streets of London, where every other house has a history such that one might well pause before it, and ponder for hours. I walked along the fields where many a grand scene had been enacted. At Winchester I visited the old cathedral. I went through it. I would live in it a month if I could. The wide interior was filled with unimagined beauty and glory. That cathedral was built in successive ages; so that every part of the architecture, by the harmony of the varied materials of which it was composed, fitly represented how all forms of religious thought may be harmonized in one great community of the true Christian Church. I saw the tombs of the old kings. Greater than they were the three great architects who had constructed this mighty cathedral. It was a museum of antiquity. It was full of life. I trembled with sensibility. And the impression will never die out of my mind.

But what is that cathedral compared with this silent cathedral, the Bible, in whose aisles have sounded the footsteps, not only of

kings and emperors, but, from generation to generation, the footsteps of the little child, and the mother and father of the household; and the footsteps of multitudes upon multitudes of worthies of the church, all the way back, a hundred years, five hundred years, ten hundred years, fifteen hundred years; and the footsteps of uncounted heroes who have gone up to heaven consoled and enlightened by the pages of the word of God?

How venerable is this Book! How full of precious memories is it! How does it not only teach us the way of life, but group about itself the most significant features of modern history! And are we, with the sciolist's ignorance, with unvenerating contempt, with ill-omened presumption, to ostracize the Bible, to expunge its truths, to drive it out of our library, and to live without its light?

My young friends, do not be over-zealous to catch up the latest things. Do not abandon the faith of your fathers on the strength of the popular representations which men make in regard to what is true and what is false. I read as well as you do. I think I am as honest as you are. I shall take the truth, wherever it leads me. This has been my determination thus far. And having been now for more than forty years an ardent follower of truths as they have been revealed by science in respect to the human mind, and in respect to all the great elements of social life, I have changed, in many regards, my interpretation of the word of God, but not my faith in the Bible. And I believe it far more firmly now than I ever did before. To me science is a ratifier of the truths of the Bible. And I find them substantiated by the latest discoveries of science. I do not see any more than any others; but I think I foresee, nebulously, that there is going to arise a Christian era when the claims of the Bible will seem more reasonable; when its power, when its great elemental forces, cleansed from much of superstition and much of ecclesiasticism, will have an authority which they are not permitted to have now.

Hold fast, then,—not to forms and ceremonies (which are mutable things; which are optional; which are to be used if they benefit you, and which are not to be used if they do not benefit you); but to the great essential truths of human character, and human necessity, and divine interposition; to the great outlines of destiny and duty; to the guide as to the way in which you are to live, as to the part of your nature which you are to cultivate; to the directions in respect to reason, and moral sense, and faith, and hope, and, above all—luminously above all, as the beginning and the ending, the fulfillment of the law—to the blessed commands in respect to *love*.

Cast not away your faith in these sublime teachings of the word

of God. I exhort you not only not to cast them away, but to verify their truth in yourselves. Be wise unto salvation; for ere long the mists will gather about your eyes. Ere long will come that day when you shall hang between the hither and the thither spheres, and this world will die out of your sight, and its sounds will no longer impress themselves on your ear. And it is of vital importance that you should have that aim, that inspiration, that attraction, that shall lead you away from the clod, from the animal, that shall bring you into the spirit-world, and make you a child of glory forever and forever.

Whatever you lose, do not lose heaven. Whatever you give up, give not up your God. And then he will never leave you nor forsake you; and you shall stand in Zion and before Him.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Thou holy and blessed God! vouchsafe to us a sense of thy presence. And as we cannot rise to thee, nor help ourselves by our senses, grant unto us that divine influence by which the knowledge of God is imparted to us. Awaken in us the hidden and spiritual life. May we feel in the soul the pressure of the divine hand—the presence of the divine heart. May joy be breathed upon us by thy Spirit. May we find peace diffused from thee. May we be able to dismiss all thoughts that harass; all doubts that cloud; all sorrows that grieve. May we be able to come into thy presence rejoicing. And as little children trust their parents, so may we trust thee. May our hearts lean upon thine. Oh, that we might know thy will more perfectly! Oh, that we might be delivered from the thrall of error, and from everything which misleads! Oh, that we might know, with the simplicity of truth itself, what is the law respecting ourselves! Oh, that we might have insight into thy word; that we might know how to detect its truths; that we might know how to interpret them into our life, so that they shall become the habits of our soul! Oh! that we might have that poverty of spirit which shall bring a true humility! Oh, that we might have that purity of heart through which we shall see God! Oh, that we might have that disposition which shall make us the children of God!

We long for all those accomplishments of the soul which shall bring us into intimate relationship and holy concourse with the justified spirits in thy heavenly kingdom. We do not deprecate thine earth, though thou thyself hast laid it aside. It is not to escape pain and punishment that we strive. We know that between us and utter jeopardy thou dost stand with infinite mercy. We leave to thee the knowledge of the unknown. We leave to thee those great influences which man does not discern and cannot comprehend. We desire to be brought into the knowledge of God, even though we do not understand him; and into the knowledge of our life, though all thy government and thy paths through the universe are not yet known to us. Give us this believing heart; this trusting spirit; this loving nature; this obedient disposition.

We pray, O Lord! that thou wilt remember all who are seeking to help themselves. And if any are discouraged, if any feel that the way is too great, or that the path is too narrow and too steep, grant them hope; and may they by hope be kept from going back again and betaking themselves to unworthy ideals of life. May none be weary in well-doing.

If there be any that are shaken in their faith, from the grounds of their fathers, and from their own inheritance of belief, and are perplexed and distressed in mind, and wrestle with questions which will not be settled, and which they cannot manage, Lord, we pray that thou, who didst come to thy disciples when they were tossed upon the sea in a great storm, and in the night, and didst still the waves, and bring calm and peace, wilt appear to them. Wilt thou draw near to all that are thus shaken; to all that are tempest-tossed and not comforted. If there be those who are seeking to restrain mighty and powerful inward dispositions, knowing what is right, and striving for right things, and yet with constant discouragement, their purposes dashed down by the impetuous strength of their lower nature, O Lord! art thou not on their side? Wilt thou not be patient with them? Wilt thou not accept their desire, and help them to desire even more, and to more utterly strive? And may they be willing, as it were, to pluck off the right hand, to pluck out the right eye, and to die rather than yield. Help them; for great is their need of help.

Oh, how mighty is pride! Oh, how strong is avarice! Oh, how insatia-

ble is the lust of praise! Oh, how imperious are the appetites and the passions of our nature! Lord, thou knowest altogether what we are. For such thou didst come forth. For such thou didst suffer and die. And now, in the struggle which is begun in men, wilt thou forsake them? Wilt thou not give them thy Spirit to help them in every time of need, and with every temptation open the door of escape? Grant that there may be a believing and faith-bearing life in every one of them.

We pray that thou wilt be with those who have escaped from the snare, and who are seeking with might and main to flee beyond the reach of the arrows of temptation. Speed them, and put thy shield above them, and deliver them from their adversary.

We pray, O Lord! if there be those who are weak, and who lift not up so much as their eyes to heaven, but beat upon their breast, and say, God be merciful to us, sinners, that thou wilt be more than merciful to them. Meet them, though they are yet afar off. Throw thine arms about them. Call them thine own, and bring them, wondering and amazed at thy clemency, back into obedience and into love.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt be with those who have come late in life into the way of piety, and who, having long incarnated sin in their dispositions and lives, are seeking now to throw it out again. O Lord! we pray that their faith may not fail them. We pray that they may now serve thee with all the eagerness and energy and whole-heartedness with which they have served the world, the flesh, and the devil. Make them happy illustrations of thy grace; may evil and abandoned men take courage by them, and know that there is a way by which they may be restored to Jesus, and to spiritual life, and to truth, and to honor, and to safety, and to everlasting glory.

We pray that thou wilt revive thy work in the hearts of those that have grown cold, and in the hearts of all that have fallen away from their faith.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt excite inquiry and anxiety in the hearts of those that are without thee, and that are careless, and that are sporting with things that are of eternal interest.

We implore that thy kingdom may come in this congregation. May all those that are laboring in word or doctrine be greatly comforted, and greatly inspired by thy spirit; and may they spread thy truth everywhere.

Build up thy Churches. May thy cause prevail, and all this land be filled with the power of thy truth, and the nations of the earth see the light of thy coming. May the new heaven and the new earth, in which dwells righteousness, appear, and may the Lord reign in all the world.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee to bless the word of truth which has been spoken to-night. We pray that we may be wise, and give heed to the truth as it is in us, and as it is in the world around about us. We thank thee for that truth which has forerun and outrun science. We thank thee that now thou art stirring up so many to search the foundations of the earth, and discover the secrets of its structure; and that the light coming thence is light bearing consolation. We thank thee for all that the truth of thy word has done, and for what it is doing. We thank thee for what it has been

in the family. We thank thee that it has been an inspiration for liberty, and for all that is right and just among men. We pray that thy truth may have free course to run and be glorified. And may all that which is pure, and which has power in the human soul, be extended throughout the earth.

Wilt thou hear us in these our petitions, and accept of us, for Christ Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

GOD'S WORKMANSHIP IN MAN.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Jesus Christ unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.—EPH. ii., 8-10.

IT seems very much as if the apostle had a conception of a possible manhood that altogether outran any notions of morality which prevailed at that time—indeed, that had not even been revealed. The line of development that seemed to open before him in and through Jesus Christ was one which was impossible except to a soul which was drawn by the power of God. It was to be a life and character wrought, not by human volition, however it might concur and incidentally coöperate, in an inefficient way. But that which he saw as the true manhood was so large and so far in advance of anything that existed, that he speaks of it as being the workmanship of God, through Jesus Christ.

We are to be saved, not by what we are worth ourselves; not by that which we have attained. Looking at ourselves in some sense as a piece of art, a picture, a statue, or an exquisite piece of machinery, we are not worth saving. In and of ourselves there is nothing worth preservation. And all the work that we have ever done on our own character and nature does not amount to any considerable value. If we are saved, it will not be because of that which we have succeeded in doing; it will be because of that which has been done upon us and in us by another and higher Artist-hand. If we inherit salvation in the life which is to come, if we enter upon a life of immortality in blessedness, it will be because we are saved by grace.

Now, I understand by *grace* simply generosity, divine goodness in the conferring of benefit, in distinction from divine justice. It answers very much to what we should call *liberality* or *generosity*.

A man of property in New York is presented every year with his tax-bill. And he does not pay it out of generosity: he pays it because he must—because it is right. It is a debt; he owes it; and

SUNDAY MORNING, May 14, 1871. LESSON: HEB. IV. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 130, 905, 1185.

he pays it out of a sense of duty. But we hear very soon that he has endowed an academy, or that he has built up a professorship. He has given fifty thousand dollars to lay foundations of education which shall go on instructing future generations. But this was not paying a debt. He was not obliged to do it. Nobody had a right to present any claim to him of that sort. He did not do this thing from the same feeling that he paid the bill which the tax-gatherer presented to him. He gave the money out of his generosity. And we consider that a very high type of character.

Now, when we read that we are to be saved by grace, I take it that God does not look on our workmanship in ourselves, and say, "Well, all things considered, that soul deserves to be saved, and I will be equitable, and save it." No; I understand that, looking upon men, God finds nothing in them that in and of itself is worth saving—that there is no debt, no justice, that requires that anything in them should be saved. But, nevertheless, I understand that God, looking on universal being, says, "I will save men." Why? Just because He feels like it. His goodness impels him to it. He does it because his heart is the seat of royalty in benevolence. It is a grace of God, it is a gift of God, out and out.

If you consider that this is the ground on which every human being is saved, if saved at all, it reflexly puts a very dark coloring, a very low estimate, upon the value of human nature, and human character, and human conduct. It certainly, by implication, makes man seem very sinful, and very crude and imperfect—as he is. Except through the generosity of God there would be very little hope, and there should be very little expectation, that any would be saved.

The workmanship that is here spoken of is conduct, and its relation to character-building. The vast majority of men have no ideal of character, whatever. Taking the race throughout, the greater portion, I suppose, scarcely have a conception of what we mean by the word *character*. They have a very few—and these the very lowest—rules for external action. That is the height to which they attain.

If you go within the circle of light where the Christian idea has raised up a conception of character, and where it has been advanced through some stages, implying the moral condition of all the primary faculties of a man's soul, their habits and their tendencies; if you take different persons that have this educated idea of character, and then measure human nature, you will find it to be very low. If you examine it by any true standard or ideal of measurement which the Gospel itself affords, you will find it to be so low that, as you go

on from step to step in the investigation, I think you will bear witness that there is nothing in it that is worth saving.

I do not mean that there is nothing there which may not be pitiable, or that may not address itself as a motive to divine compassion. I simply mean that, as considered in and of itself, the more you look at human nature—and that, too, in its best estate—the less reason have you to feel that a man deserves salvation on account of his own goodness and righteousness. I mean not only that men are sinful once, but that from end to end of their life they are so sinful, the style of their character is so low, the habit of their development is so poor, the nature of their individual action is so limited, or so mixed, or so imperfect, or so mean, or so sullied, that whether looked at in detail, or comprehensively, every one of them must needs say of himself, "If I am saved, it will not be on account of any good that is in me, but on account of God's mercy to my poorness, to my poverty, and to my wickedness."

Let us, then, look a little at what may be fairly expected of man—at what the ideal man applied to the real man will develop.

In the first place, it is very clear that among the primary duties is that of bringing out into strength and fullness and energy every part of that nature which God has given us in the talents that are committed to our trust, to trade upon—if you employ a commercial figure, or in the seed that he has given us, to plant and develop—if you take the figure of husbandry. No superfluous part is given to the mind. It is large. It is various. The faculties which are comprised in what we call the human mind, or the human soul, not only are many, but are related to each other in such a multitude of ways as to constitute a complex organism, every part of which is to have given to it its full value and force, and its proper education.

Now, in point of fact, not one fifth part of the average of the mind of man is developed at all. If the human body were to be developed as the human mind is, we should have monstrous feet, and monstrous legs, and monstrous hands, and a monstrous stomach, and a little button of a head surmounting them. We have all the basilar instincts in power among men. Whatever implies appetite, or passion, or force, or executiveness—all cunning, all deceitfulness, all those tendencies by which the lower animal nature either conserves or defends itself—these elements are strong in men without schooling.

The social instincts are next strong, but irregular. They are without any systematic development. The intellect is comparatively feeble here. Only parts are developed; and those are parts that

have some relation to physical and profitable uses. The moral nature of most men is almost *terra incognita.* That part of the human soul which lies the most nearly in communion with God is desolate.

As you go from the high estate of man to the animal below him, you find that strength increases, usually, in that ratio. This is true of men generically. The best part of the human soul is uncultivated. If it acts at all, it acts irregularly—it acts without system and without plan, under special provocation, or inducement, or motive.

So that, if you look at the average condition of men, even in civilized countries ; if you take an inventory of men in the professions and trades, through towns and villages—men that are *very honest* and *very excellent*, as it is said, and as the world goes—if you take an inventory of such men, and estimate how much there is of them, what are they ? They are living in their lower nature. They are populous there. There, there is no lack of furniture. But as you rise up from their lower stories toward their higher, at every step there is less and less furniture, and more and more desolation ; and the top story is the worst of all for emptiness.

This view is not itself so piteous as the next consideration. Not only is every single faculty in the human mind to be developed, and educated, and made bright, but there is to be a harmonization of the faculties of the mind. There is to be a harmonious organization of all the mental powers. And it is here, perhaps, more than anywhere else, that we see how low man's civilization is, and how exceedingly low is his religious development. If you look at that part of man's nature that is more closely allied to the animal economy, and which I have been accustomed to call his *basilar* nature ; and if then, above this, you consider that development of a man's faculties which may be called his *social* or *affectional* nature, by which he is allied to his fellows ; and if, then, above this, you consider what may be called his *moral* or *ethical* nature, which includes reason, and all the spiritual intuitions, as well as the ordinary moral sentiments—if you take into consideration that each one of these departments is itself complex, that it is made up of many separate faculties, the question of organization becomes one of extreme importance.

There must be some direction given to the mind. There must be something like unity between the different faculties, or the mind will be at discord with itself, pulling in various directions. It will be full of alternations. There will be that in it which resembles the action of the waves of the sea, where one wave follows another, rubbing out the sand-marks that it makes. And life will be full of disturbances.

Now, men do harmonize their nature. One class of men will be found to give all the power of their being to their basilar instincts —to their passions and appetites. Every other part is subdued by these instincts. The whole force that is in them—whatever there is that is good in their higher nature—in their reason and their moral sentiments—lends itself to give impetus to their lower nature. They are strong and mighty, and, relatively, well-nigh omnipotent in their physical tendencies. And so they have very little quarrel with themselves. They have a line or direction; they have organization and discipline; and there is hardly anything in them that ever rebels. It is their passional nature that directs the economy; that lays out the campaign; and all the rest of their nature adds its force to this lower part.

So you shall find men with art, with music, with beauty, with every kind of noble instrument, carrying out the most infernal purposes. You shall find them making hideous resorts and dens, and garnishing them with all manner of attractive elements, merely for the sake of better serving the animal nature of men. And there is harmony; there is unity; there is subordination; only the highest is serving the lowest. All that is divinest, all that is nearest angelic in its possibilities, has been brought down and put under livery to that which is carnal and animal. And the manhood is prisoner to the animalhood in man.

Then, here and there, just the reverse takes place. There are many individual instances of persons who have given the dominance to their reason and to their true moral sentiments. That which is beautiful, that which is true, that which is just, that which is pure and imaginative—all these things are to them the chief ends of life For these ends they live: and they have so subordinated the whole of their minds that all their social affections work toward these ends, and all their lower nature is auxiliary to them. Every part of the man, the whole force of his being, works through reason into moral sentiment, and, through that, by faith, into the invisible. And he is harmonized. His highest sentiments are put in a position of dominance, and everything below them works potently up toward it.

Now, intermediate between these two classes stand the great mass of mankind. They have no harmonization whatever, as a class of men. They are good to-day, and bad to-morrow. Circumstances—not any inward habit, nor any volition in themselves—determine their course. They are swept as the tide sweeps the straw and leaves that float upon it. They are without any definite moral purpose. They are without any distinct social object. They are without any decided animal tendencies. If they are under circumstances

where the inducements are strongest toward the flesh, they yield in that direction. If at other times the social affections are in the ascendancy, and circumstances are favorable to the development of these, they act accordingly. If, as is now and then the case, influences work with great emphasis on their moral nature, they respond to that. But their action is alternative. It is inconsistent. There is nothing fixed about it. Their mind is not organized around any one center. Sometimes the power is in one place, and sometimes in another. Now one part leads, and now another.

This is descriptive of the great mass of mankind. If you look at men with the idea of drill, and of the harmonization of every part of the mind, you will find that their workmanship is very poor; that they have made very little out of themselves yet; and that that which has been made of them, as I described in the second instance, has been wrought out by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. No man lives in this world who has wrought out supreme harmony in his nature around about his moral sense, except by the inspiration of God. I shall believe that there are blossoms on the ground and blossoms in the air when the sun is blotted out, quicker than I shall believe that there are any high developments of character except by the direct influence of the soul of God. All really good and high influences drop down from the bosom of God into the heart of man. We have enough in the physical world to teach the human body; we have enough in society to teach man's social affections; but the moral nature of man must have its pabulum directly from God himself. And whatever is good in man is not his own workmanship. It is wrought in him through Christ Jesus. It is God's Spirit that is working in us.

The great mass of men have not submitted themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ; and if you look on human nature as it averages in society, you will find not only that there is not the development of every faculty, but that there is not the carrying up to their full power of any of the faculties.

Nor, secondly, is there any harmonization of all these powers. They are out of joint, irregular, discordant, and for the most part unproductive. We are not to confound the success of men in doing certain things outside of them with their success in building up their ownselves. A man may build a city, and yet not build himself. A man may excel in an art, or in a science, or in some department of mechanics, or in any of the humble relations of labor; a man may achieve success in certain directions, and these elements may indirectly be to him educators; but, after all, when you come to look back at his manhood, at what he actually is, the more you look at

him, the more you see that his success has not been very considerable, and that he has not much to boast of.

If you look one step further than this, you see not only that the individual elements of the mind are left undeveloped and untrained; not only that the whole mind is left without any organization, or with a wrong one, which tends constantly downward; but that every part of the mind is in what may be called a disheveled state. It will be found upon examination that every part of the mind is working in a low mood, upon a low plane, and without much advantage except from what is inherent in all minds. There is very little moral force such as comes from habit; and there is still less moral force which comes from the high automatic power of the mind.

I have said that even the highest forms of development are exceedingly imperfect—and it is true; but it is inherent in every faculty, by habit to develop force which it had not before. And in that direction lies intuition. I do not say that it is possible for a man, by sedulous effort, and by carrying culture in certain lines, and by certain methods, up to a given point, to come to that which in us corresponds to what is omniscience in God; but I do say that we can, by partial experience in ourselves, frame some conception of the direction in which omniscience lies. Men at first measure by the eye. From the power of seeing they pass to the lowest reason—the perceptive faculty. And out of that gradually comes the reflective reason. Facts first, and then the relations of facts. But the relations cannot be seen. They are abstract. Thus they develop a higher reason. And higher than this comes that kind of reasoning which consists in framing larger complex ideas out of the memory of what you have seen and what you have thought about. And when you have attained to this, you begin to be a reasoner and philosopher.

But there is a state higher than that, by which men who have trained themselves to it are able to see without looking. There is a power by which the mind seems to flash light out of itself into the obscure and void; by which, without the process of observation, men's minds jump to the truths far beyond them.

How many times, and in how many ways, do men show this! No man knows anything well, till he knows it without being conscious that he knows it. Everything has to be learned first by painful volition—by a consciousness of trying and getting. But when you have thoroughly learned it, you have learned it so that when you do a thing you do not know that you do it.

When you take a step, do you stop and go into a calculation

about it? Do you say to the muscles, "Now lift; pull"? But let a man be sick three or four months, so that he is unable to leave his couch; and when the joyful morning comes that the doctor says to him, "It will do you good to get up and walk to yonder chair," see that old baby get up! He never before thought about how he should set his foot down; but now, see how he puts it out of the bed; and how he sets it down here, because there the floor is level; and how he avoids that crack; and how, because that board is a little raised, he carefully puts his foot over it, in order that he may not totter! Every single step he takes, he thinks of and measures just as an engineer that was laying out a railroad would measure and think. He is so weak that he is obliged to learn to walk over again. He has to learn once more that which he learned as a child, and which he has forgotten all about. But after a month's practice, he will resume his old way, and go out of doors, and into the fields again. And soon he will chase the flying ball, and wrestle, and perform all those old joyful feats of the athlete to which he has been accustomed. And then, will he think of the stubble, or of this stone, or of that depression? No; his eye will sweep across the field; he will go over brake and through morass, sweeping with his eye from point to point, and he will act without thinking. His hand will see for him, and his foot will see for him. A man's whole body, under such circumstances, is a piece of brain, apparently.

And as it is with one part, so is it with every other part. Do you suppose that a musician says to his fingers, "Now touch A," or, "Now touch B"? Is there anything of that kind in the playing of musical instruments? Does not the finger itself find the keys? Does the flute-player think when and how the fingers shall move? It is the notes that blow up the fingers, evidently! He does not think about them. Do you suppose the type-setter spells out the words that he sets up? Why, a man will set up a whole column of news, and when it is struck off, and he sits down and reads it, it will be as new to him as to anybody else. He does not know one single word of it; and yet he has picked up the ten thousand types, and put them together to make the sentences and the paragraphs, with scarcely a mistake. All these processes are the lower forms of what I mean by *intuition*. The body has the power of training almost every muscle and part to do things without thinking.

And so it is with the mind. Men cease to calculate any more in small numbers. They *see* what two and two make. They are not obliged to add and subtract, unless they are unfamiliar with figures. For me, it would be a good half-day's work to run up a page

of figures, and result them; but my friend Charles Marvin would run up those columns, three or four figures broad, all at once, in almost no time, and set down the amount, and every figure would be right.

Now, where does this power come from? It is that inward possibility of going by intuition which does not stop to think of processes, but flashes out the result, and afterwards goes groping back to see how it came to be flashed out.

So far as these great powers which lie in the human mind are concerned, it is our business to develop them. Is it not the business of a grape-vine to bring out, every year, all the grapes that are in it? And is not that a poor vine which will not bear what is in it? And is there anything more reasonable than that we should find out ourselves by unwinding that which is wound up in us? A great many persons are developed here and there; now and then a faculty in them is trained; but is it so of every part of their reason, and of their moral sentiments? Even in the best men, are the highest and supremest elements of the mind, the supernal tendencies of the soul, all those ecstatic feelings which go to constitute the interior life of Christians—are these so trained that they flash light spontaneously on every side? Is that the condition in which men are?

Our own workmanship on ourselves is very poor workmanship. If we are to be saved, it is because there has been Another working on us and in us, who has done better by us than we have ever done by ourselves.

That last remark leads me to say that there is an æsthetic element in the development of moral character which is to the ethical just what art is to mere physical development. I mean that in the development of the higher forms of human character there is the beauty of fineness, of harmony, of symmetry, of proportion, of that which we call, in manufacturing, *finish*. You will find in the writings of the Apostle Paul, particularly, constant allusions, not simply to moral qualities, but to moral qualities in their highest forms of beauty.

"Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report."

Give without grudging. It is not enough that you simply give. You must do it beautifully. Your generosity must not be clownish. It must be fine. It must be noble. We are to be *easy to be entreated*. And if you are going to be lenient, if your obstinacy is to be persuaded, it is not to be done in an awkward or ugly manner. We are not to spit out our acquiescence. We are to learn so to be obedient to the highest nature that is within us, and so to train it, that when it develops itself into action, it shall be *finished* action.

When the cutler brings his goods to market, he may have the

best of steel in the blade, and the best of horn in the handle, and every part may be riveted strongly; but if the blade has not been polished, and if there be no finishing work on the handle, he cannot sell his stock. It is just as good for practical purposes as though it were finished; but people do not want it. They want their blades polished, and their handles finished; and they are so used to having goods sand-papered and burnished, that they will not take them unless they are so. There must be art in them. And this is carried so far that when articles are good for nothing, art is put on the outside to make them seem good for something. And men buy things for the sake of their looks.

The idea of perfection lies in the direction of the æsthetic—and as much so in social and moral elements as in physical things. Men are not now in any respect finished in their higher relations—I mean even good men. There are hundreds of men that are in the main laying out their life and character in right directions and on right foundations; but how few men know how to be good variously, systematically, gracefully, genially, sweetly, beautifully.

What is the average impression of the community in regard to religion—that it is beautiful, or that it is gawky? What do children think about ministers, and deacons, and class-leaders, and church-members? I am speaking of the best men in churches. What is the average impression with regard to them in communities? Are the substantial traits of religion so unfolded that they are like flowers in the garden of the Lord, full of fragrance and beauty? On the contrary, do not men think of religion as something stiff, something hard, something that consists mostly in reserves, withholding people from things which they want to do? Is it not regarded largely as a gaunt and barren cross—or, for the most part, a cross without the revered associations of Him who hung upon it? The more closely you look into the way in which the human mind develops, the more I think you will be dissatisfied with it when you come to compare it with any high ideal of development or accomplishment. The universal life in the faculties is low. The harmonization of the faculties to singleness of direction and unity of action and discipline is extremely imperfect, if not unknown. The development of habits into automatic action is of very limited extent. The fineness, the beauty, the finish, the loveliness of everything in the character of man, is far from any ideal standard. And the consequence is, that there is seldom an act which can bear the measurement of any high standard of human life.

I do not mean that there are not acts which are right as measured by our lower standard of right and wrong; but if you con-

sider how a man was made, what he was meant to be, and what he has in him the capacity of becoming, there is scarcely one single action that he puts forth which is worthy of a large manhood. There is very little beauty in him. Character is very low, even in the highest. Men are developed very strongly and very largely on certain sides of their nature; but looking at them completely, measuring them by the full conception of God in their creation—by any ideal of their possibilities—how very ragged and how very feeble is their character! The great elements of soul-building are in a condition of the utmost disorder and insufficiency. There is nothing in the soul itself which should tempt one to preserve it. There is nothing in that which we have sown and wrought out in the field of experience that would naturally tempt a perfect being to harvest it. There is scarcely anything in the regular rounds of human experience that one would desire to perpetuate. If you look at men as so many workers in the great shop-world, there are found few things that they have fashioned which the great artist God could look down upon with any considerable satisfaction. The things which we take the most pains in doing, when you measure them by that higher standard, the law of God, are so insignificant, are so imperfect, are so full of flaws, that you can hardly conceive that one would wish to preserve them.

If this be a just view of man's condition (I have purposely avoided theological technics, and attempted to develop my idea respecting the condition of man's nature from the more familiar side of modern thought) then, I think it fairly right to infer that at death one of two things must needs take place. When we come to look at the actual condition even of the best persons, in all the respects which I have mentioned, it seems impossible that a moral change of relative position should endue one with perfectness and with morality. If, therefore, persons pass out of this life with such a low average of development, with so little that is drilled to high moral excellence, they pass out, and enter into the kingdom of God on the other side still in the condition of scholars, we will suppose, as the children of a primary school go into an academy, where there are higher teachers, and higher branches, and where they themselves are better prepared to go on in their development, than when they were struggling with the prime elements or the lower stages of thought. It does not seem to me, as I look at men in the whole round of their condition and stage of development, that on dying they can be expected to enter upon a perfected state. There is in them so much that is not developed at all, so much that is deaf and dumb, so much that is comparatively paralyzed, so much that

is shrunk; there is in them so low an average of development on every side, that it seems to me impossible that anything short of a miraculous touch of re-creation can bring them, in a moment, though they are set free from the body, to the attitude of perfect beings.

We enter the kingdom of heaven, in more senses than one, as little children. I take it that we leave this world to go on with our stages of discipline—not the same which we have here, but what will, in our changed conditions and circumstances, be equivalent to what discipline is in our earthly relations. But it does not seem to me rational that we shall be trudging, trudging, trudging, clear up to the moment of death, and that then we shall start up absolutely different. There will be another climate, another soil, and a nobler growth; but there will be *growth*. That which you have not learned here, you must learn there. That which you have left undone in this world, you must do in the world to come.

In Labrador, the missionary, at the beginning of a short summer, sows the seed of the vine. It comes up, and gets a little start, and is taken out of the soil and husbanded during the winter, to be put out again when the next brief summer sets in. But in the course of the ten years of this missionary's life in that cold region, the vine does not get more than three or four feet high, and never shows any symptom of bud, or blossom, or cluster. The soil is too cold, and the summer is too short. At length, the missionary is recalled to his native land, and he takes this vine, the pet of his leisure, and brings it down into our southern latitudes, and plants it. It is now the same vine; it has the same root; but it is not the same sky that is over it. Look long, O Summer! Look warm, O Sun! Search and find where the hidden things in the vine are. Behold, how it begins to shoot up! See what a stately growth it is having! Look at the branch upon branch which it is throwing out! Observe the smell in the air! See the blossoms, and after the blossoms, the clusters which the autumn shall see hanging impurpled and ripened! But it took another soil and another sun to produce it. It never would have reached that state in Labrador.

I remark, secondly, that if this general view of human nature be correct—if man is as undeveloped, as irregular, as imperfect, as inconsistent as the tenor of this discourse has indicated—then there is no more noble experience known among men than that which strong men are accustomed to look upon with the most suspicion. The fact that a man is under profound suffering from a sense of his own sinfulness—or, in common phraseology, that he is under *a powerful conviction of sin*—is regarded by multitudes of men as an evidence of want of strength of judgment. It is thought that men who are

thus affected are laboring under a hallucination of mind, and that they are subjecting themselves to requirements which are too severe, which are not natural, and which do not belong to the truest conception of manhood.

There are a great many mild-mannered men, men of meekness because men of weakness, who seem to sail through life without ever being agitated. Did you ever see a brook only an inch deep that could have waves twenty feet high? If a man is shallow enough, he will not be deeply moved. And multitudes of men are serene, and go through life quite satisfied with themselves—and I thank God that there is anything in the universe that can be satisfied with them.

But I speak of men who have some sense of the depth and the power which there is in the soul. There are men who have some sense of the reach which there is in eternity. There are some men whose conception of character and whose self-esteem take hold upon immortality. These men cannot afford to be lost, nor to run any peril of loss. And to such men there is nothing more wise, nor more profoundly philosophical, than this very sense of sinfulness, which so many regard with contempt.

When you take a large conception of what the possibility of manhood is, as sketched in the word of God, there is not one part of a man's nature which is not stained. There is not a single faculty in which he does not sin every day. There is not a feeling in him which is not flawed and enfeebled; which is not irregular and inconstant; and which is not used for selfishness more than for benevolence; for lust more than for purity; for the animal more than for the spiritual.

This is not confined to one part of the mind. It extends all through it. And if a man thinks of himself as lying under the eye of God, the Supreme, I do not marvel that his soul heaves with a sense of its own worthlessness and unworthiness before God. There is no more manly experience in this world than the laying of the hand upon the mouth, and the mouth in the dust, and the crying out, "Unclean! unclean! God be merciful!"

I remark, thirdly, that the church, and all its members, stand before God just as every other man stands before him, in so far as absolute character is concerned. When men have been converted, they are simply begun upon by a higher power. They are not perfected. And no man is saved because he has been baptized. No man is saved because he is a member of the church. The fact that a man is a member of the church is no evidence that he is good in any important and proper sense of that term. A man is not less a

sinner in the church than he is out of it, in this more generic use of the word *sinfulness*. Every man that is in the church is dependent simply on the generosity of God. If you are saved, and if I am saved, it will be because, having been brought into the church, we made such good use of our time that, with the help of God, we repaired the damage of sin, so that every side of our character was being built up, and gave promise of being a fit temple for the New Jerusalem, whose walls are built of precious stones, and whose gates are of pearl. By nature, we are full of pride and selfishness; we are of the earth, earthy. All through us is imperfection, and stain, and rottenness; we are altogether sinful; and the best that can be said of us is that we are attempting what others are not attempting; that we have a noble purpose, and that we are striving upward to the absolute condition of perfect men. Every man before God is a creature of such sinfulness that he is obliged to say of himself, "By the grace of God: not by my own virtue and goodness, but by God's generosity, dying for me, and bearing my burden, I shall be saved, if I am saved at all. It will be, not anything that is beautiful or good in me—oh, no! but the unspeakable pity, the profound sorrow, the mercy that is in Christ Jesus."

Therefore the reality of sin, the existence of deadly evil, should be no reason why one should not repair to God for sympathy and for succor. There are many who, being conscious of wickedness, and, not being Christians, do not see why they should ask divine succor. There are many who are conscious of being bound by evil; and they fain would break away from it. If only they were Christians, and in the church, God would help them; but they are sinners, and out of the church, and they dare not go to God. Many a man would fain break away from the cup, but he knows that his own strength is insufficient; and as he is not a Christian, as he has made his investments in evil, he does not feel that he has a right to draw upon the bank of divine mercy. He keeps no account there, and he has no reason to think that his check will be honored there if he presents it.

Now, there is not a human being in or out of the Church who is not an object of divine compassion and divine love. God may have the love of complacency when his Spirit shall have drawn you more and more into the lines and lineaments of his own blessed beauty; but God is Love, and he will not wait for your turning before he loves you. God so loved the world that he gave his son to die for it, and to die for it while yet it was in sin—yea, and at enmity to him. God's love precedes all reformation. And there is no man—not a drunkard, not a gambler, not a thief, not a person that is filled full

of passions and appetites—who has not a right, to-day, now, here, in his heart, to look up and say, "God help me!" Your sinfulness is not a reason why you should keep away from God. It is the very reason why you should go to him. He is to your soul what the physician is to your body. When your body is racked with pains, or is swollen with disease, you go to the physician, that he may heal you. And so, the consciousness of your sin, and of the hatefulness of it, is the very reason why you should go to God.

But may a sinner pray? Who may pray, if not a sinner? If a sinner may not pray, then who on earth may?—for there is not a man on earth that is not a sinner. Every human soul is so far from the goal of perfection that if sinners could not pray there would be no utterance of prayer. Yes, each sinning soul may pray when it has a consciousness of its wickedness and uncleanness. That is the time that God invites you to call upon him. Will God hear the prayers of wicked men? Yes, he will. He has heard them since the world began. No man ever desired to be better that that desire was not the witness that God was present, influencing and persuading him.

Do not wait, then, till you are members of the Church, and do not wait till you are changed, before you begin to pray. Oh selfish man, who does not want to be selfish! that aspiration for something better is of God. Oh proud man, who sees a better way! that seeing is the light of God. Oh worldly man, who is conscious of spiritual things! that consciousness is of God. These are things that the Father sends to you as imperfect children. Poor you are, sinful you are, low and wretched and wicked you are; but there is might in God. Call upon him, venture upon him, and he will transform you into his own glorious image, and make you meet for the inheritance of eternal life.

There is nothing that makes discords in churches, and discords between separate churches, so hateful as the consciousness of the imperfection of all churches and all church-members. To see a general breaking out among well, strong men, is bad enough; but to see men who are gathered together in a plague-hospital fall out with each other, and to see bed rail at bed, and fevers send gibes over to fevers, and dropsies swell with tumid importance and great superiority over emaciations, and emaciations point and chatter at the hideousness of dropsies—that is worse still. What would you think of a conflict where cripples were fighting cripples? What would you think if you saw dying men using their waning breath to rail at dying men?

But are not all churches hospitals? As God looks upon his chil-

dren of different names, does he not see that they all are dependent upon his generosity and grace? What man, measured by the divine standard, is good enough to set himself above his neighbor? What man has not, as God sees him, so much of the canker and rust of pride as to take away from him the right of arrogance? To that very point Christ spoke the parable, where he that had been forgiven went out and laid his hand upon his fellow servant's throat, and said, "Pay me what thou owest me!" and would not be lenient. God teaches us that we are debtors to him, living on amnesty and forgiveness. We are fed by divine mercy. And surely, God's goodness to us ought to teach us to be forbearing and lenient toward others. No man is so good that he can afford to become a censor. Certainly, no man can afford to speak censoriously of the faults of others who are in churches around about him. For the one great household on earth, the one great family of man, the race, live in the very first stages of development; and imperfection and rudeness and ungrowth characterize them all; and at every step of unfolding we see some irregularity, some perversion, some sinfulness; and all through, from top to bottom, the whole earth groans and travails in pain by reason of unfulfilled conceptions and aspirations, of mistakes, and of sins. It is only the grace and mercy of God that keeps the whole world from dismal collapse, that raises it higher and higher in the moral scale from generation to generation, and that shall yet bring out of it, not our workmanship, but God's—*his workmanship in the human soul through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

O Lord our Saviour, we remember thine earthly love. We remember the tenderness of thine heart for little children. We remark how they ran toward thee, such was thy winning way. Nor wouldst thou permit any to separate them from thee. Thy heart was warm toward them. Thou didst put thine arms about them, and thine hands upon them; and thou didst bless them. And it would seem, ever since, that children have taught us our best lessons of thee. We still hear thee saying, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Lord, how far have we wandered from our early purity, and simplicity, and trustfulness, and clinging love! How much do we need to be brought back again, and to become lowly, gentle and pure of heart—unsullied and unstained.

Grant, we beseech of thee, thy blessing to rest upon these dear parents; and while they are, with all fidelity, instructing these children, may they also learn from them lessons which shall be of comfort and of great profit to them, all their lives long. Every day, as they bear and forbear, for love's sake, may they understand thy patience and forbearance toward them. Every day, as they deny themselves, and find greater delight in doing for

* Immediately following the baptism of children.

others than in doing for themselves, may they understand the royalty of thy nature and of thy government. Every day, as they see what labor love will endure, how long it will suffer, how unwearied it will be, through good report and through evil report, and how fruitful it will be unto the end, may they understand the everlasting glory and summer of thy love to them. O Lord! how slowly have we learned, in whose houses so many teachers have been sent! How many times have the gates been opened, and thou sent through thy little ones to be our instructors! How slow are we to believe! How dull to understand! But at last, we beseech of thee, that we may be caught up into that most blessed of all knowledge, the knowledge of thy pity, thy tenderness, and thy love, which forgives, and heals, and lifts, with wondrous strength, those that are fallen down, and puts them again upon their feet, and establishes their going.

We beseech of thee, O Lord our God! that thou wilt grant unto every one of us more and more trust in thee. As we have less and less occasion to trust ourselves, may we see that our help is of thee; that all our love comes from thee; that we stand in thy thought; and that it is because thou dost not forget us that we live in this royal way. May we remember to be to others, according to the measure of our strength, as thou art to us. And may we seek to know more of thee by seeking to fulfill to those around about us the same glorious offices of gentleness, and patience, and forgiveness, and sympathy, and helpfulness which thou art evermore practicing toward us.

We ask that the lives and the health of these dear children may be precious in thy sight. And as thy servants have come into thy presence, this morning, bearing the tokens of thy thought and love and blessing, forbid that they should be satisfied with external rites; but prepare them to keep or to give to thee the gifts which now make their hearts so glad. And if these dear children shall grow up in this world, may it be in truth, in purity, in virtue and in piety. And we pray that thou wilt grant that a blessing may go with them out of the sanctuary. May the spirit of the house of God be borne with them into their own homes, to lighten them, and to sanctify them, and to enrich them. We pray for all the children that are in the church, and all the children that are in this society. May they not be forgotten in the hour of prayer, or in the secret places of consciousness and experience. And we pray that they may be brought up with all faithfulness, and that they may grow fruitful in all goodness.

Thou hast blessed the prayers of thy servants. How many there are that come this morning remembering the goodness of God to them in their children! How many there are that can look over their flock and see not one gone! How many there are who have not yet had the fountain of grief opened in the loss of children! How many have seen their children grow up to man's estate and walk in the way of safety, and of truth, and of honor!

And we beseech of thee, O Lord our God! if there be any in thy presence who mourn over their children, and who think thou hast hidden thyself, and forgotten to be gracious, that thou wilt comfort and strengthen them, and let them not doubt thy faithfulness. And may they wait. Though seed long sown seems dead, yet by and by, even after the winter, it shall come forth, and not perish utterly May they have confidence in God, and persevere unto the end.

And, we beseech of thee, that thou wilt bless all the young that are gathered from Sabbath to Sabbath in our midst. Remember our Sabbath-schools and our Bible classes—all the teachers, and all that are taught. We thank thee that there are so many who have it in their heart to give their time and their strength in this labor of love. And while they are blessing others, may they be themselves more blest.

We pray that thou wilt spread abroad intelligence among the ignorant; and may there be many hearts tenderly alive to the goodness of Christ to them, that shall go forth to bear tidings of this precious salvation, on every hand. Let no place be unvisited. On every household may the Sun of righteousness arise and shine. And may this great city be won to morality and piety. And, we beseech of thee, that all causes of evil may be overruled and destroyed; and that all influences for good may thrive and grow strong. May love prevail against selfishness, and truth against falseness; and may all things in the community tend more and more to the honor of God and the welfare of man.

We pray, O Lord! that thou wilt bless thy churches of every name throughout the land. We thank thee for so many tokens of kindness among them. We thank thee for the growing confidence which they exhibit. We thank thee that thou art overcoming all divisive influences, and that thou art inspiring men with a spirit of unity. And we pray that thou wilt still unite thy people by heart; by sympathy; by common faith in thee; by a personal experience of thy mercy; by their labors for others. May they be united in self-denial, in pain-bearing, and in cross-bearing. And we pray that thou wilt thus give to us the confidence and conviction and zeal and faith of thy people in all the world.

And grant that thy Church may hold together nations, so that they shall not be rent asunder by intestine wars. Grant that nations may be so sanctified by the Spirit of Christ in their citizens, that nation shall not go out against nation any more to war. Oh, for that day of enlightenment when men shall live by reason, and by kindness; when forbearance shall be a virtue; when men shall not think it an honor to strike quick, and to strike often. Grant, we pray thee, that men may suffer rather than inflict suffering. May they be like thee, and bear each other's burdens. We pray that the long delayed predictions which respect this world, may begin to be fulfilled. Let not our faith utterly fail. Let us not doubt that bright time that is coming, when men shall be perfected on earth. Let thy kingdom, in which dwelleth righteousness come, and the glory of the Lord fill the earth, as the waters fill the sea.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises, evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt take away from us all pride and conceit. Give us to see, as thou dost see it, how barren our nature is—or that it is fruitful only in things evil. How imperfect are the best things! and how wicked are they who have the most goodness! How little have we learned! How little facility have we in the management of the great estate committed to our charge! How crude and imperfect yet are all the fruits that are in us. Lord, we thank thee that thou dost not choose us for our beauty, nor for our goodness. We thank thee that thou takest us from reasons that are in thyself. Oh, the depth of thy heart of love! Oh, the wonder of thy patience! Thou nourishing Father, thou ever-living and everlasting Saviour, it is out of thee that our life must come forevermore. And when ages have gone by, and we have had long experience of the ripening air of heaven, then, more than now, we shall ascribe all the praise, and all the glory of our salvation, to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

THE NAME OF JESUS.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that, at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—PHIL. ii., 9-11.

This is a prophecy, not formal and official. It is an outburst of the expression of feeling—one of those royal insights which were so peculiar to the Apostle Paul. The long track of history passed over, the whole race's development and consummation ended, he saw things as they would appear beyond, in the final sphere and full disclosure above. And then there should be one Name that was mightier, more magical, more marvelous, more blessed than every other name in the universe. That should be the name of Jesus. Then, in the praise of that Name, every joy and ecstasy would break forth spontaneously and irresistibly. Then, in that universal admiration and adoration of praise offered to Christ would be a glory attributed to the Eternal Father himself.

So much for the substance of the declaration. Now let us begin and follow this thought up.

In its lowest use, a name is a sign affixed to a thing for the purpose of separating it in our regard or representation from every other thing. After a while, in the progress of time, by use, a name not simply signifies the thing which it represents, but comes also to have in it, and to convey to those that hear it, a notion of that which inheres in the thing. It rises from a mere physical appellation, and begins to have an interior sense. And then, naturally, it is applied to qualities themselves. Or rather, the name of a thing, when pronounced, conveys the idea, not so much of the thing itself, as of its quality.

Both of these are combined when names are applied to persons. In regard to persons, they are at first the simple means of identifying different ones. They separate one man from another, and are signs of separateness and individuality. Thus, a list of names in a

SUNDAY MORNING, May 21, 1871. LESSON: PHIL. II. 1-13. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 268, 292, 551.

directory conveys very little impression except of so many separate persons. It gives very little notion of character. It suggests very little idea of association. A list of letters in a post-office, if we knew the persons, would, when the names were pronounced, stir up in our minds a thousand thoughts of their dispositions, and of their histories, and of their relations, and of the incidents connected with them; but as we read them without that knowledge, we merely think of numbers as applied to persons. So a roll of names of soldiers, a series of names set down in any way, merely conveys to us an idea of the individuality and separateness of the person mentioned from the mass.

Our own name means more to us than any other, of course; and it comes to mean more and more in proportion as we actually grow, whether within or without; whether our development is in the sense of relation to external things, or whether it is in manhood, and has relation to invisible qualities.

We are not conscious of how full of nerves our separate names are. We are not conscious of how much of pride, and hope, and joy, and fear, and love, is subtly connected with the sentence in which our own personal name is pronounced.

If you touch the name, you touch the soul itself, often, and send it forth in flight, sometimes in one, and sometimes in another direction, according to circumstances.

Perhaps some of you saw on exhibition not many years ago, in New York, a singularly effective though realistic picture of a prison such as might have been seen in France during the French Revolution, in which all the half-lighted, vaulted space was filled full of persons—men, women, and children—very noble many of them—many of them historic. On the back side of the picture the door stood open; and there were the grim and savage officers; and there was a French functionary or official standing with a list of names, and calling them off. They were the names of the prisoners who were to go out to be guillotined that morning. And as the sounds fell upon the ears of the hundreds that were huddled together there, what do you suppose was the effect of the pronunciation of them? What were their names to those prisoners then? How much did they suggest to them, not only of their own selves, but of all their hopes, and of all their future, and of all their relations to one and another, to life, and to time, and to eternity itself? And all these feelings were started because the names, pronounced in connection with a certain time and purpose, touched every single chord in their souls —some with horror, and some with gladness (for such were men's sufferings then that they were glad to die).

I recollect one day when I had been traveling alone in the Alps (for the sake of that additional luxury we had parted), that, after I had been for some hours without company in that strange land, where I was surrounded by very unfamiliar and novel scenes, and where only a foreign language was spoken about me, I heard, fall down as it were out of the air, my own name, spoken so cheerily, so buoyantly, that I was utterly bewildered. Of course I did not suppose that angels were troubling themselves with me; but I knew that it must have come from somewhere above me. I was climbing up; and, turning in the road, very soon I saw revealed to me the welcome face and familiar form of a friend from New England, whom I did not know was absent from home. He was coming from the other direction, and, looking down, he had seen me. I never knew what I should feel like when I was reduced to an absolute abstraction until that hour, when my name was pronounced under such circumstances. It produced in me a bewilderment and whirl of feeling. I knew not whether it boded good or bad, joy or sorrow. Whether it came from friend or foe I could not tell. It caused a total inward awakening or agitation such as I had never experienced before. A man's name takes hold of a thousand inward chords, and may be so pronounced that almost every nerve and sensibility of his being shall be thrilled with it.

One of the most matchless scenes in the New Testament history is connected with this, where after he came forth on that blessed morning, Jesus walked in the garden, and Mary, the most devoted of all the women, could not see him because of her tears (for people's griefs are very apt to hide from them the presence of the Comforter), and she said to him, supposing he was the gardener, "Sir, if thou hast taken him away, tell me where thou hast laid him," and he who had spoken with her, and had not been recognized by her, simply pronounced her name, "Mary!" and with that she cried out, in an ecstasy of remembrance and of love and of gladness, "Rabboni!" and would have clasped his feet. The whole scene is too dramatic to be interpreted. Read it, and if you do not feel it, nobody can interpret it to you. The whole force of this scene was in the line of the history of her heart or past associations, and of all her hopes, and all her longings, and all the visions and aspirations which his company and teaching had inspired in her. These had been buried with him. And she stood before him, and he talked with her, and not a single chord vibrated until he struck her name; then her whole life burst out like the morning.

Our names, then, stand intimately connected, not simply with our persons and our qualities, but, as we have seen, with our own

personal experience with character, with dispositions, with all manner of mental traits. But in the progress of time, names come not simply to stand for things and the qualities of things, for character and the qualities of character, but rise from the specific and the individual, and take on generic forms. Or rather, personality may become so large as to seem a genus, and not a species—still less an individual.

Thus, the names of men of action in the world remain, and they interpret, to those who use them, whole periods of history, or whole departments of human development. Where men have had to do with human affairs in such ways as to prove themselves to be pre-eminently masters in any direction, their name not only identifies them as particular individuals in history, but identifies them with whole complex developments of affairs in history. It signifies what a man has fashioned. Thus the word *Cæsar* remains to-day to mark a quality. *Cæsarism* indicates certain ideas, or a certain department, or a certain genus. Alexander is another such name. Bonaparte is another. Bismarck, with his extraordinary mind, is another, and will be so in times to come, even to a greater extent than now. And many other distinguished persons might be singled out to show that a man's name does not stop with his personality, nor with the qualities of his disposition, but that it goes on to signify large departments of history which have been particularly associated with him. A man's name, then, does not so much stand for him individually, as for the great departments of affairs in which he has acted. Numberless examples of this will suggest themselves to you. The great philosophers and giants of intellect have left their names as historic landmarks. Art and beauty are also represented by names. In other words, there have been names so associated with these things that when we think of them, we do not so much think of the persons, as the scenes in which they acted, or the realms which they created. To those who are familiar with art in antiquity, such great names as Phidias, and Raphael, and Titian, and Albert Dürer, and many others like them, who might be named, do not stop either with the individuals, or with the narration of their history, but with their suggestion of certain great departments of civilization and refinement and philosophy.

The same is true in respect to the reverse qualities. There are names in which we have stored up almost all that we ever thought of which is hateful and hideous. Judas is a receptacle of whatever is base to our thought; Nero of whatever is brutal in cruelty; Macchiavelli of whatever is malignant and selfish and cunning in craftiness; Arnold of whatever is wicked and base in an unpatriotic soul;

and Jeffreys of whatever is false and corrupt and oppressive in judicial stations. So names signify moral qualities, and departments of them.

Now, out of this thought we begin to come near to some conception of what our text has declared. That by reason of his own personal character and history, God should give to Jesus a name, is a large idea. A day shall come when Christ's name shall stand in the Universe as the suggestion of all that is most beautiful, most lovely, most admirable, strong, intelligent, and effective in executiveness; of whatever thought, and whatever quality, and whatever sentiment we have kindled in us which is connected with any special name in its lower forms. We shall come to a day when we shall find that in that one Name we rise above all others, and that it comprehends in itself that which on earth has been distributed through ten thousand minor names, each carrying some separate quality, some single affection or disposition, or some department of qualities or affections. There shall be a Name so large, so full, that it shall include in it the sum of all development during the whole period of time.

It is indeed a Name above every name. In the evolution of time the experiences of mankind are growing more and more into association with that Name. The best things which for the last two thousand years have taken place, have gathered themselves around about that Name. Bad as has been the handling of religion; base as has been much of the history of the Church that undertook to minister religion; corrupt as have been many of the hierarchs; recreant as have been many of the men who have enlisted under the banner of Christ; dark, cruel, bloody, hideous, infernal, as have been many of the suggestions and the associations and the experiences of the Christian Church, such was the power of Christ, the beauty of Christ, that his name has risen above them all. And the best, the sweetest, the purest, the noblest things, the things best worth living for or dying for, are still associated with the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In spite of his ministers, in spite of his churches, in spite of all the malignity that has been manifested under the cloak of that Name, its innate quality and power and its fruits have been such that it has come down to us, after all, full of the sweetest suggestions of the most transcendently beautiful things. And yet, we are ourselves dim-eyed, and short-sighted, and we see through vapors, and have never seen him clearly. We have seen him as through a glass darkly. And in the small tract over which the race has passed since his coming, in the little evolution that has taken place among the race since then, it has not been Christ in the

body that exhibited Christ, but Christ in the great mass of the human race, uplifting them in their multiplex and multiform relations in life. His name has steadily gained power. Even they who theologically disown it, morally receive it, and call it transcendent. They believe in it who do not believe the Book, nor the supernatural elements in it. They who deny divinity, and claim that Jesus was but an extraordinary man, a moral genius, readily and willingly advance him to the forefront. And if that be the ascription of those who do not enter into sympathy with him, or with his name, as advanced or advancing, what shall be the ascription of those who are in sympathy with him, and with the best conceptions of things moral and spiritual?

But more in detail. In the last great vision—the final and enduring one—of Christ, the intellectual treasures with which the universe will then be acquainted will center toward him, so that his name will stand in connection with all that we on earth call philosophy; with all the treasures of knowing, among men; with all the bounties of combination in the human intellect. Whatever there is to be that is resplendent, answering to our earthly conception of intellectual force and achievement, will stand connected with his name above every other.

The truth, the beauty, the refinement of the moral sentiments, carried through every phase, through every combination, through every conceivable adaptation, with all the force that inspiration can give to them, and in heroic forms, shall stand connected with Jesus Christ. And what is this but saying that when we shall see him as he is, and he shall be revealed to us in all his thought, and feeling, and life, then we shall perceive that he is connected by his history with all forms of moral heroism? As Raphael's history connects him with the most exquisite things in art; as Cæsar's name connects him with the most efficient things in military life; as Michael Angelo's skill with the chisel connects him with the noblest conceptions which man has formed of statuary; as many a thinker is connected, by reason of his relations and investigations in the sphere of philosophy and thought with the brightest achievements of human genius, so, when we behold at last the full personality of the Lord Jesus Christ, he will be One of such moral relations, and his history will be found to have so associated itself with everything that is most resplendent in intellectual thought, and research, and execution, and combination, and creative force, that that which is the noblest, and most transcendent in truth, in honor, in sublime faith, in self-denial, in meekness, in humility, will be embraced therein, and that his name will be verily a Name above every name.

If we say *meekness*, we think of that person who is the meekest; if we say *moral courage*, it suggests to our minds one who is characterized by that quality; if we say *disinterested love*, we are reminded of another who has boundless philanthrophy; and if we say *philosophy*, it is still another that we think of. There is no one person on earth who is big enough to carry all these guns. Most men are like gun-boats, carrying one heavy gun which swings round and round, and with which they do most of their fighting, the rest being done with small arms. Often great men are great in single or but few directions. None are completely rounded out in their manhood. But when we come to see the one Man who is above every other man—the great typical Man, who represents the race—he will be shown to have so touched human life and human experience on every conceivable side, that his name will suggest that which we look for now distributively among all men.

So all the qualities which are suggested to us here by the affections—as tenderness, and gentleness, and patience, and sweetness, and the beauty and rapture of love—will be found so centered in Jesus, that in the last revelation of himself, when we go where he is, and see him as he is, they will stand in his name. His name will shake down associations of these things upon our heads with the sweetest perfume. When we shall see him as he is, then, whatever we have thought of distributively on earth as noble, as pure, as true, as sweet, as grand, as inconceivable in perfection, but dimly foreshadowed; whatever we have thought of as courage, as skill, as justice; whatever we have thought of as grand in poetry, in art, and in eloquence; whatever in sovereignty; whatever in taste or in beauty; whatever we have thought of as admirable in rulers or in subjects; whatever has called forth our admiration in men or in women, in grown persons or in children; whatever we have thought of as beautiful in picture or statue; whatever we have thought of as heroic on the field or on the road; whatever we have thought of as glorious in aspiration and achievement—when we shall see Him as he is, then these things, distributed through the race, and seen but as sprouting germs, we shall trace back to Him, the Fountain and Sum of them all.

So that if you, a great artist, die, and rise and come into his presence with your best conceptions of art, and commune with him, you will find that you have conversed with the supremest Artist, and you will be filled with rapture of admiration.

Or, are you a just judge, sitting as high upon the sphere of honor as one well may sit in this life; and are all your thoughts disciplined and drilled in such directions? When you rise to be-

hold, through those avenues by which you may best understand, your wonder and amazement will be, to find in him the royalty of those qualities which on earth you never dreamed to exist in such perfection—not even in the ideal days of prophecy.

Ye who think of death as the end of love—as the quenching of the torch of affection; ye who think of tenderness as belonging to these mortal scenes; ye who mourn the growing of your children, because as they grow to man's estate their ten thousand sweet and witching little ways of love will perish out of the household—O wife-heart! O mother-heart! O lover-heart! rising in the last day, in that Name shall be more treasure, and more exquisite beauty, and more inflections of love, than it ever entered into your heart to conceive. And all the witching graces and developments of life, looked back upon by memory in its fondest mood, shall seem to you but as a tangled wilderness of weeds, compared with the garden of the Lord.

Is it discourse by philosopher? None shall have such sweet discourse as He. Or is it the power of him that speaks? No orator shall have such power as He. From him came all things. "Without him was not anything made that was made." Or, is it the refinement of the imagination, or the suggestions of a chastened and exalted fancy? Do not, because, owing to your early training, religion has seemed so acerb and so rigid; do not, because religion, as you have been accustomed to think of it, has been full of *thou shalt nots*, and because *shall not* is written upon every sweet and shining temptation; do not, because you have been shut up to days and ceremonials—do not, for these reasons, transfer your false notions of religion to the higher life.

How hideous, I might almost say, was heaven as it used to be interpreted to my childish imagination! It was a prison. It was built, to be sure, of beautiful things; but a prison is a prison though it be built of alabaster, or silver, or gold. It was a place devoid of the freedom and the enjoyments of home. It was wanting in those elements which make life joyous and happy. And if heaven be a place of propriety; if it be a place in which everybody is regimented; if it be a place where, at stated times, we shall turn and bow one way, and then turn and bow the other way, and say our prayers, and repeat our hymns—if that be heaven, it is a mechanical heaven; it is an automaton's heaven; it is a machine-heaven; it is a mechanician's heaven, and a poor one at that. But to me heaven is not such a place. I gather, to represent my heaven, whatever there is that is most resplendent on earth. When I paint my picture of heaven, I borrow from the clouds; I borrow from the morning

and the evening; I borrow from the severe grandeur of the winter, and the luscious luxuriance of summer. When I portray my heaven, and its population, I take whatever on earth is most lithe, most bewitching, most genial, and sweetest in nature and society. I select for my sitters those that are the noblest-browed; those that I would go farthest to see; those that excite in me the most wonder and rapture. I get together all these treasures, and with them I depict my heaven.

But these are only the accessories. There is a Name in which reside all the qualities that inspired these things.

And my Saviour is One with whom I long to be most intimate, and in whose presence I shall be most rapturously happy, and ineffably blessed. And whatever direction I take—if I go to the east or to the west, to the north or to the south, upward or downward—there is my Christ with me. Whither shall I flee from thy presence, O Chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely?

I have not far to go to satisfy you that if there be such a thing as a name that covers the whole round of human faculties, that fills itself full of the best associations of our best hours, it will go infinitely beyond the most instructed human experience. And I need not say what the effect of such a Name would be.

I never saw a triumphant scene that had not a minor chord in it. I remember, as if it were but yesterday, the time when Kossuth made his magnificent passage from Castle Garden up through Broadway. I remember the surging of the people. I remember the wealth of enthusiasm that was manifested. I remember the helplessness of that roar which rolled like a storm-wave upon the shore of the ocean, and which seemed feeble and unimpressive as compared with what the people wanted to do. And I could not help feeling how the human heart longs for something to worship. I could not but think how, when you bring before men, embodied, that which answers to their conception of heroism, their whole soul goes out yearning for it. Men who are not good, long to see people who are good. Men who are inexpert, love to gaze upon expert men. Cowards like to see heroes. And all humanity, by its very consciousness of weakness, by its very infirmities, by the dim light of its aspirations, longs to find something that is divine. There are things in every man that are reaching out after the God.

And so, when these qualities and tendencies of our nature have been gathered up, as it were; when they have been trained; when they drop from the stem on which they were carried during their first stages; when we are brought into the other life under other conditions, where that which is best in us shall have the first chance,

and that which is worst in us is left behind, and we stand in the presence of this royal Person whose name is connected with everything that is transcendent and noble in our conceptions, need I say what will be the result? Need I say that there will be a fulfilling of the declaration:

"God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth"?—

a Name which, being pronounced, as it were makes the very universe quiver with spontaneous and irresistible enthusiasm.

It will touch every chord of sensibility. The very memory of sorrow and of joy combining the rapture of the ennobled in the heavenly land; the fulfilling of all dim thoughts and hopes; the reappearing of everything that was lost and seemingly annihilated to us; all which the heart has felt of ecstasy—these shall be so connected with the Lord Jesus Christ that he will seem to be the embodiment of all those things which we have most dimly thought of as possibilities, and longed for. There our Brother, our typical Head, the man Christ Jesus will stand bodying forth to us the whole of the existence of that which is possible in such a being as ours. And the participation of it, the associations of it, will bring every knee to bow, and every tongue to confess that he is Lord. And it will be a spontaneous homage. It will be a homage rendered, not because you must render it, but because you cannot help it.

It is also affirmed that in that day and hour the rapture of the universe in the presence of that name, or that person Jesus, will be the greatest honor that can be conferred upon God the Father.

"God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

I have seen in the thicket little birds, that had caught and fastened themselves, and that, while their companions were out among the leaves, or above them singing in the clear blue, fluttered and strove, but could not free themselves; and I have seen many sweet and tender hearts that longed to pray to Christ Jesus, but that were so bewildered with the questions that had thralled them, that they did not dare to pay divine honors to that sacred name. It is to you I come, bringing to-day this glorious emancipation. I do not ask you to accept one view or another; but I do ask you to hear me while I declare this: *God has exalted Jesus to the forefront of the universe; and he has given him a name which is above every other name to you and to your thought; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, of things in earth, of things*

under the earth, of things throughout the universe; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Go as far as that, and I will not trouble you any farther. You need not reason; you need not undertake to settle a thousand questions of theology; but if, looking upon Jesus, your heart longs to ascribe glory and honor and praise to him, and if you want to worship him, there is your charter—there is your liberty. For, can one be condemned in the great hour of disclosure who rises and says, "I bowed the knee, and I confessed that Jesus was Lord: it was in obedience to that command, that I might honor the Father"?

How does it honor him? I do not know. You do not know. You will see by and by how it honors him. But if there is one truth sweetly patent in the Bible, it is this: that if any ransomed soul wants to ascribe to Christ everything that one soul can ascribe to another, there is an open door to do it. Here is permission for it. It is no idolatry.

Do you suppose that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, sit in such niggling jealousy that they grudge to each other the affections of men on earth? Do you suppose that there is any such feeling of loftiness or superiority among the Persons of the God-Head that if any soul wants to give a rapturous expression of its love to the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, he is tripped up by some jealousy between them? To suppose any such thing as this is to ascribe the meanest feelings to the highest divine existences.

Then love, worship, bow down, until there is no thought or feeling in you that will bow any lower than it bows to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. You cannot make that name more blessed than God is making it; nor can you ascribe any divine attribute to it that has not already been ascribed to it. So come out of your bondage, out of your dialectical state, out of your thrall, and be delivered forever and forever from the power of sin and Satan. Go with your tribute to the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be accepted. If you do not know how to manage it, God knows to manage it for you.

We shall, perhaps, derive further instruction, if, leaving these higher thoughts, we begin again at the lower point. I have endeavored, by some few faint words and images, to give you an idea of what this name of Christ is, and is to be. And the question recurs, What is the name of Christ now? What is it to you? To many persons the name of Christ is a mere mnemotechnic symbol for historical purposes—simply a word for a date.

With others, the name of Jesus Christ is a word of superstition. Their Christ is that which narrows them. To them the name of

Christ is only another name clothing the poorest ideas of morality and of authority. There is very little in it that is exhilarating to them. There is very little to it that touches in them the chords of gratitude, of enthusiasm, or any form of heroism.

To others it is a Name of controversy. As they regard it, it is full of suspicions and bitternesses and divisions. And so, again His heart is pierced. Again His raiment is divided. There are many whose only thought of the New Testament is as of a magazine of artillery. There is no sweetness in texts, to their taste. They value them merely as clubs to be hewn for the conflict which they are waging. The wondrous beauty of the love of Christ, of his words themselves, are but so much metal with which they forge swords and armor and breastplates as they go out against each other in theological controversy. The garden of the Lord, the exquisite beauty of the New Testament, is as if the wild boar of the forest had desolated it. On the very tree of life he whets his tusks, that he may go into belluine and savage warfare.

I know of nothing which seems more offensive to me than the associations which I have but just got over, connected with texts of the New Testament which should rise up as so many fair pictures to us—as so many flowers in the peaceful meadows. And over these very scenes in which the life of Christ is opened, that it might come to our heart or imagination and inspire and guide us in the best feelings of our life—over all these tranquil scenes fierce war has raged; and every part of the battle-field in the four Gospels, almost, is redolent, not so much of Christ as of the controversies about Christ which have prevailed in the Christian church. Happy will be those ages in which the associations of the New Testament are not controversial.

Far higher than these are those associations which I trust many of you are not unfamiliar with in your own personality and experience and history, by which your childhood is connected with Christ. Blessed is that household which has an interpreting father or mother whose heart prophesies to the children the best things of the Godhead on the side of love and lovingness; and unhappy is that household who have no heaven, though they hope one day to earn one—those children whose calling and election has not yet been made sure; those children who are bowed down with weakness and heart-sickness and disconsolateness from immaturity and unripeness, and yet have no Mediator, no brooding God, and no mother-heart in God.

Many children have no God. Many children have a God that is metamorphosed and made into a demon. The God of many children seems to be without the element of love to them. He seems

to be a God of severity, of sternness, of wrath. They hope one day to be able to placate him, to get on the sunny side of him. And then they think they will be happy. But now it is Winter to them, and they are on the north side of him. Blessed are they who have outgrown any such experience as this, having found the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

How many of you have associations connected with Christ which make him to you what he is said to be in the Scriptures; so that you can say, as the people of Samaria said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of the things which thou didst tell us, but because we have seen Him ourselves"?

How many have had a revelation of Christ in sorrow, in yearnings, in suspense, in anguish, in raptures of joy, in attainment, in strife, in defeat, and in victory! How many persons are there whose lives have been lives that seemed to be explorations in that direction, and whose thought of Christ is intimately connected with their whole warfare, brought to their own personality!

But by and by all these other names will fail. By and by the name of superstition will cease, and the name of controversy will cease, and the name of philosophy will cease, and the name of private and personal experience will cease, and we shall rise into a common inheritance of that Name which is above every name—fuller, nobler, grander, more powerful; of that Name which is full of fiery inspiration to every part of our nature; which gives unity to our whole scattered life; and which shall gather us into our own individuality, and make us kings and priests unto God; of that Name which shall have molded and perfected a true manhood in us. And then we shall stand before the sovereign King of all that we are and hope to be.

The day cannot be far away when that Name shall come to you, filling the heaven, filling every avenue of joy and wonder and surprise. What has life here to be compared with that? Why are we so anxious to live? Why do we take the broken fragments, the scattered elements, and think them such treasure that we do not desire to go up to the mountain from which they came? Why should we be so delighted with a little spark of beauty, that we should not desire to see the flame of beauty from which it sprang? Why should we cling to the imperfect forms of goodness about us, and not desire to see the only perfect form?

Speed, then, O days! Hasten, O night of life! Let the Winter pass. Come, O Spring!—that better spring, when the Sun of

Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings, and we shall know as we are known, and be forever with the Lord.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We ask thy help, our heavenly Father, that we may gain release from our own ignorance, and that, under the inspiration of thy Spirit, we may rise to some such thought of thee as shall fill our hearts with gladness, and inspire us with hope and with love. We thank thee that thou art bringing us, by a thousand influences, through grace, through providence, and through the ministration of strength in us, toward that estate of blessedness which they have who are in thy presence, and who see thee as thou art, and forever dwell with thee. On this tumultuous earth is yet sighing. Groans and pains are yet here. Here, is change. Here, hope rushes to disappointment, and conceptions come untimely to blight. And we are glad that just before us is a land where all expectation is more than fulfilled; where all things are perfect, or growing toward perfection; where harmony has suppressed all difference, and sorrow and sighing have fled away; where there are no more tears, and where there is no more pain nor sickness, forever. We rejoice that there is a light above our darkness; that there is eternal day burning unconsumed forever; and that all the tendencies of life are thitherward. In spite of what we see, in spite of what we hear, in spite of all that is evil, and all the causes that are working to destroy, and all that maketh pain and suffering, we rejoice that we may believe in a Redeemer. Thou, O Saviour! art not for the few. Thou art the One of ages. The circuit of thy being is infinite, and thy word is not less, and thou art going according to thine own way, yet undisclosed to us, step by step, through the periods of time, and art working out gloriously, beyond all comprehension of men, thy plans, and their eternal good. The wilderness shall bud and blossom as the rose. The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head.

We are as those that are lost in the wilderness. We long to behold the garden-time. We listen to hear the voice that shall call us from our winter. We wait for the end which we cannot see, but which we feel pressing us, and leading us in the right way. We rejoice that our faith is so much more comforting than our sight. We ask to be delivered from the thrall of our senses, and from those lower reasonings which belong to these mortal bodies in contact with this material world. We ask for that power of faith by which we shall be able to realize the invisible and the ineffable. We ask that we may be lifted by inspiration into that realm where we shall reason according to higher things. We pray for that rest, we pray for that confidence, we pray for that hope, which endures through the night. We pray for God in us; for Immanuel; for the divine consolation; for thy forgiveness; for the cleansing of thy Spirit; for that food which thou art to every hungry soul; for that water of life by which thou dost quench evil desire, and satisfy holy yearning.

We beseech of thee, O Lord! that thou wilt grant unto every one of us this realization of thee, this sense of sonship, and this glorious certitude that nothing shall separate from God those that love him through the Lord Jesus Christ. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt, according to the infinite mercy of thine own heart, and not according to the wisdom of our understanding, nor according to the wisdom of our supplication, grant unto

us all the things which we need. Wilt thou guide us by thy providence. Wilt thou ordain the events that surround us at home and abroad. Wilt thou grant that from day to day, all the multiform affairs that come, we know not whence, and rush, we know not whither, may work for good to us. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt ripen us, and that we may see in ourselves the growing savor of the early summer.

We pray for all that are distressed in mind; for all that look backward upon the waste of life, upon its innumerable mistakes, and bemoan themselves. And we pray that their sense of inferiority and sinfulness may not bring discouragement. May they look to their Physician, and for their trouble find remedy in him.

We pray for all that are troubled and bereaved, and that are mourning over sorrows fresh made. We pray that thou wilt appear to every one of them, and that thou wilt minister to their souls that consolation which men cannot give, and which, when thou hast imparted it, men cannot take away.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt be very near to those who feel sensible, to-day, that they are not under God's guidance. If there are any who stand upon perilous places where they may in a moment be overwhelmed and destroyed, and who know it, and who hardly know where to look, we beseech of thee that they may feel that thou art near to them, cooling their temper of passion; that thou art near to them giving stability to their better purposes, and inspiring them with a higher and holier life.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt draw near to those who are tempted, and who have been snared by temptation, and who, yet, are not corrupted nor carried away utterly. Oh, may they be restored to thee. May they be delivered from the devourer, and be brought back to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.

We beseech of thee, O Lord! that thou wilt be near to those on whom rest heavy burdens. Grant that as their day is, so their strength may be. And grant that they who are perplexed, and seem wearing out with care, may learn the divine art of casting their burden on the Lord. Wilt thou sustain them, and give them clearness of judgment. Grant them wisdom of purpose, and patience in execution; and more and more may they learn how to use the world as not abusing it; and how to reap advantage among their fellow-men without destroying; and how to live and labor by their higher and nobler nature, and not by the ministration of their lower feelings.

And we beseech of thee, O Lord, our God! that thou wilt grant that more and more we may learn to be bound to one another in a truer sympathy. May we interpret, not from the side of hatred, but from the side of charity. May we not be armed against men with impulses combative and destructive; but may we be more and more meek and sympathizing and all-healing in our desires. We pray for the prevalence of the spirit of Christ. We pray that we may feel his presence, though not in any tangible and visible form, yet diffused, according to his gracious promise, in the household and in the hearts of his people. And we beseech of thee that we may discern the beginnings of heaven even upon earth.

We pray for all those that are not with us to-day, but that think of us —some from beds of sickness; some from watching-places, where they are waiting patiently upon those that are sick; some from upon the sea and its tossing waves; and some from sanctuaries of the wilderness, from forests, afar off.

Grant, to-day, heavenly food, heavenly light, and heavenly fire, to all those who are of this household of faith. And may the mercy of God, which already we feel, and which yet more we supplicate, go everywhere, among

all those hearts which are united to ours by the sympathy of love. And we pray that thou wilt bless those in our midst who are laboring for the young, for the ignorant, for the outcast, for the wanderer. We pray that thou wilt never let their zeal fail. May they not be weary in well-doing. And may they that water be themselves watered of God. And we pray that thus they may find that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

We pray for the children. Will the Lord grant that they may grow up in strength, in manliness, and in virtue. May they grow up to love their country, and to love their fellow-men of every land, with a larger Christian patriotism, and with a larger charity for mankind than we have had. We pray that they may be saved from vice; from all the evils of inexperience; from the waste and wear of all passions; and may they grow up confirmed in virtue and in piety, to do nobler work, in a nobler way. We long for the time when the earth shall be crowned with a better generation of men, and when living and life shall be purer and grander. We beseech of thee, O Lord! that thou wilt not let the years delay, but make haste and come; for the whole earth is weary with waiting. How much is yet dark! How much is but in twilight! How much of that which is in twilight promises but a cloudy day! Come, Lord Jesus, to complete thy work; to advance the conditions of men; to perfect the glorious things which thou hast spoken by the mouth of the prophets. Bring in the latter-day glory, when there shall be no war, and no misunderstandings, and no animosities, and no separations, and no envyings, and no jealousies, and no malign feelings; but when joy, and peace, and purity, and truth, and meekness, and gentleness, shall have possession of the whole earth.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

THE LESSON FROM PARIS.

"How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."—Rev. xviii., 7, 8.

I do not apply these words to the condition of the fashionable capital of Europe, as if I supposed they were a prochecy; although, if they were, we scarcely can imagine how the lines could have been framed more exactly to fit the condition of affairs. It is rather because of this singular adaptation, and rather as an illustration, that I have taken them, than as a part of prophecy.

The outburst of war, which last summer took place in Europe, was one of the most sudden and terrific which ever visited that war-worn continent; and the results were without a parallel in history. It seemed as though wars had been so numerous that they scarcely could make for themselves a new path and a new issue; but we were mistaken. In one campaign, the proudest and most warlike nation went to pieces like clay before iron. And the world felt that it had been living in an illusion; that this empire had not been strong, but had only pretended to be, so easily was it destroyed, and so utterly futile was every exertion of its strength.

The whole world was moved, not to wonder alone, but to profound compassion. And then, when the severity of battle remitted, so that access might be had, the hand of charity was reached out from every civilized people on the globe, somewhat to alleviate the distressing wounds and calamities which war had made in France. And none of us expected, then, that there would speedily spring out of that war another war more cruel and more terrible than anything that had gone before.

Scarcely had the most elegant capital of Europe escaped from the misery of famine, before it fell into the clutches of misrule; and the scenes which have transpired in Paris during the last month,

Sunday Evening, May 28, 1871. Lesson: Rev. XVIII., 1-8. Hymns (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 1020, 1011, 982.

increasing in horror every week and every day, have filled the world with amazement, and shocked every sensibility.

In no other city could the contrast of former gayety with present wretchedness be so striking. There are hundreds that sit before me who have made their pilgrimages thither, who have dwelt in its palaces, who have strolled through its galleries with delight, who have admired its cleanliness, and who have marveled at the abundance of its resources for satisfying the rarest appetite and the most exquisite taste. Here was gayety almost without a cloud. Here was festivity that beat with dancing foot the hours almost around the year. Was there ever any place on earth so fashioned to make men gay, and genial, and happy, as Paris? Its government, its order, its safety, its cleanliness, its economies, its rarities, its luxuries, its art, its science, its beauty—the imagination teems with these elements which belonged to it; and now it is soaked with blood. Many of its fairest structures are smoldering in ashes. Thousands and tens of thousands of festering corpses lie along the streets. Multitudes of its people are in exile. More of them are dead; and many others wish they were dead. The scenes of the hideous French Revolution are enacted again. Evidently there is the same people there. Their nature is not changed. Beneath all this gayety, beneath all this kindliness, there is the terrible ferocity of the tiger.

It will not, however, do for us to look upon this with mere exclamatory feeling. Still less should we congratulate ourselves upon our own safety and superiority. We may not always be secure. It is true that we are of a different race-stock; it is true that we have had a different political education; it is true that our industrial relations are very different; but, after all, there is a certain general likeness in human nature; and no nation (in the contiguity of nations, by reason of the annihilation of space through magnetism) can now afford to see the experiments which are going on in any other nation without taking heed of its own possibilities. At any rate, if we mean to live, it must be by wisdom derived from others' misfortunes; it must be by taking heed of their mistakes, and avoiding them.

The universal horror of the cruelty of the murderous wretches that have had possession of Paris is well founded. Greater cruelties, I apprehend, have been; and yet, the wantonness of the deeds that have taken place there admit of no extenuation, and no apology. They may, however, admit of some explanation.

There was no end in view to be promoted by the sacrifice of life. There were ends that they were seeking, but they were ends which were thwarted by cruelty. Blood cements nothing.

We must not, however, roll up this murdering mass of men as simply monsters, acting without an idea, and only inspired by the insanity of fanaticism, and a fanaticism of cruelty. They were seeking, really, the reconstruction of the State. They were philosophers. They were organized for far-reaching political ends.

Who were they? What was their philosophy? What were their aims? We hear much of the Communist and of the Commune; and yet, one would scarcely choose to employ his own judgment in describing them. But it may be fair to take the description and judgment of one who, if not of them, is closely allied to them, or next in gradation from them, and who in many points holds their sentiments.

I select from the New York *World* newspaper a letter written by Robinet, the Positivist, of Paris, and sent to Professor Beesley in London, and communicated to this New York paper by its London correspondent. Robinet says of the Communists, from whom he separates himself distinctly, but with whom he also has strong affinities in many single points:

"Their philosophy is atheism. materialism, the negation of all religion. Their political programme is absolute individual liberty, by means of the suppression of governments, and the division of nationalities into Communes more or less federated. Their political economy consists essentially in the dispossession, with compensation, of the present holders of capital, and in assigning the coin, instruments of labor, and land, to associations of workmen. And their historical theory is, that the nobility and the bourgeois have each had their reign, and that the turn of the proletariat has now come. They exclude all that is outside of the working class from society, considering it as socially and even physiologically effete."

Such is the doctrine of the Central Committee of the National Guard and of the Communal Council, sitting at the Hotel de Ville, which, since the 18th of last March have been absolute masters of Paris.

He goes on to state:

"Neither the Committee nor the Council has put forward this programme in an official way, and they defer the execution of it by government or forcible means, till after the victory which they reckon on gaining over the Versaillist party."

The extraordinary part of this is, that it is not merely the upburst of a rabble which we have seen in Paris, that it is not merely the fury of men suffering physical wretchedness, as has been supposed. Such brutal civil wars all ages have seen. With paroxysms of cruelty from men that wreak their vengence without discrimination or intelligence the world is not unacquainted. But this is a crusade in favor of certain distinct, moral, political and social ideas. The working men of Paris have been studying government. They

have read, talked, lectured, and listened. Doubtless they have had educated leaders. Men of ability, and of science, and of philosophy, have indoctrinated them. And these are their pupils. The vast mass of the working population of Paris have been studiously, silently, consecutively educated in a distinct scheme of government, a distinct scheme of morality; and the bottom has broken up; and this mighty revolution has taken place—this terrible war in Paris for the purpose of gaining certain great definite ends.

This throws new light upon the movement, and gives it far more importance. It is not a squabble of wild beasts for food. They attributed all their unhappiness not simply to government, as we learn, but to society. And they assume that men have not found out the best relations by which man shall be laced to man. And they are undertaking, now, to reconstruct society, increasing the amount of individual liberty. They seem to hold that there may be *absolute* individual liberty. Nor are they altogether alone in this dream. Other nations have sought the same thing.

It is an insurrection, then, not more against political government than against social organization; and it is proposed to make an experiment on a magnificent scale of the reconstruction of men's relations to each other, and of those ideas which have been slowly accreted through the experience of ages. And all the maxims and social laws that have gradually accumulated by the trials of men in every possible conjunction and circumstance, through thousands of years, are to be overturned. A new theory is to be set in motion by these men.

It is only just to say that in seeking these ends this under-class of Paris have evinced an energy, a patience, an indifference to personal suffering, a perfect willingness to die for what they believe, yea, and an eager refusal to live, which, if they had developed them in a truly just cause, would have been pre-eminently heroic. We look upon these terrific scenes in Paris, and see that if they were enacted for a righteous purpose, the men who are engaged in them might be added to the calendar of men who have not counted their lives dear unto them, so that they might achieve a higher development and a nobler liberty.

I do not mean in the slightest degree to extenuate the reckless cruelty which has taken place. I deem it to be atrocious, and without excuse. But if these men inflicted suffering on others, they took it themselves. If they hurled death upon hundreds and thousands, they opened their own breasts to the same death. They acted in a bad cause as good men would fain act in a good cause. And it is

this that makes it all the more dangerous—for I think we have not seen the end of this uprising.

It is to be observed, in this programme which one who knows them well has published, that the nobility and the great middle class, according to this new theory, have had their time of government. That is, society has been molded upon the monarchic plan, upon the aristocratic idea, upon the autocratic notion, upon the oligarchic foundation; and it has been molded to suit capitalists—the great prosperous middle class. And now, there is to be a government which shall be shaped to suit the bottom of society—the great working-class. And they declare (it is declared for them, at any rate) that only those who belong to this class are to be considered worthy of political status and power. Instead of the whole of society organizing by class-interests, and making one government of the whole people, there is now to be a new experiment. As the top of society has organized and failed, and the middle of society has organized and failed, the bottom of society is going to organize—and it will fail, too.

The contrast between the gayety of Paris and this sullen underclass that has been educating itself and watching from beneath, forces itself upon every imaginative mind. While the upper-class sung and danced, and wearied the hours burdened with pleasure, right beneath them, and mingled, it may be, with them, were these sullen-eyed men that had their purposes, and only waited for the time of their execution.

I have seen, in the thicket, birds flitting from branch to branch, while crouched beneath, waiting for an opportunity to pounce upon them, lay the cat. As they drew near, he gathered himself up for a spring; and as they flew further away, he sank back into a state of repose; but he still waited for a chance to secure his prey. And underneath all this gayety lay these men, like a tiger watching and crouching for his victim, waiting to spring upon the pleasure-seekers of Paris.

What a contrast is there, too, in the imagination of those who have gone for business ends to Paris, and have seen the product, but not the producers! The merchant has seen their wares that filled the world with admiration; and he has brought home their silks, their ribbons, their pictures, their silver and gold ornaments, their varied machines, their ten thousand instruments of luxury, Pompeiian in splendor; and yet he has not gone back into the shop to feel the pulse that had lava in it. He has seen the wealth and the beauty of mechanic art, but of the thoughts and purposes of the mechanician how little has he known!

A man may walk through a great city, and take its length and breadth, and gauge it in various ways, and go away from it knowing nothing of the real power and strength of the most important elements in it.

Now, in every considerable city in France, it is to be believed, these views to a greater or less extent prevail. The working people of the manufacturing cities in France are substantially in sympathy with the Communists of Paris. This is not, therefore, a boil breaking out in one place. It is a puff from a volcano; but all around the mountain there are crevices through which the same sulphurous odor is emitted, showing that the whole mountain stands upon liquid fire. Without a doubt, there is a leaven among the working men of Europe of the same kind. Difference of race-stock, and difference of education, will make material modifications; and I apprehend that there never can be Communism in Germany as it exists in France. I do not believe that the Germanic stock can be run away with as the old Romanic stock can. Where the old Romanic blood is predominant, there are paroxysms, and spasms, and revolutions, and absolute fealty to leaders, whether they be cruel or humane. The Germanic stock is naturally self-restraining. Individual liberty knows, with it, how to cohere, and how to act with moderation and prudence. And I do not greatly dread the spread of Communism. But it is proper to say that there is a leaven of this theory, and that unless kindly influences are brought to bear upon it, all Europe will, sooner or later, be in alliance with such ideas and tendencies.

If you look at the purpose of the working men of France, you will find that they are almost universally without religious faith. It is not to me so very important that men should belong in this church or that church, in this creed or that creed (although I have a profound conviction that it makes a great deal of difference what creed a man believes in); but that men should be without religious inspirations of any kind is simply shocking. It remits them again to the catalogue of animals. It takes from them that which has been productive of almost every single element of progress in human life. If you annihilate the faith of the future; if you destroy the belief of a superintending Providence; if you destroy all faith in a personal God; if you sweep the horizon with your compass, and say, "That is the only eternity which men have;" if within this narrow circle, men are to live for the greatest amount of physical enjoyment, spirituality being disowned, then you have but a cage of unclean beasts. And I do not believe it is possible to rear up a system of industry—certainly not a nation of households—still less the fair fabric of a powerful and organized people—where there is no radically religious

control; where there is no inspiration of humanity; where there is no sense of brotherhood, except that which is begotten of pure interest.

It is materialistic; that is to say, it casts out of its faith and belief all spiritual things, and all the great invisible world beyond, where men are to be held accountable for the deeds done in the body.

That Communistic faith which has made this contest, and which is to be heard from again and again in the history of Europe, is revolutionary in its nature—*radically* revolutionary. It proposes not to make anything better, not to modify anything, not to stimulate new growths and new developments—nothing of the kind. It does not mean progress. It means revolution. It means absolute reconstruction from the foundation. And as soon as it can be done, force will be applied to carry out these philosophical notions. It is organized, and organizing. It is no longer a nameless rush. It has patience in it. It has learned to wait. It has also learned to act. It has learned to act by combination. And it is imparting its ideas to other cities and other nations.

The organization which is going on at the base of society among men who substantially sympathize, whether through ignorance, or through narrowness of their circumstances, or their oppression as laborers, has in it many elements of education; but unfortunately it is an education on the malign side, and is preparing them to despise law and custom, and to upturn society from the bottom. And we ought not to be ignorant of this, nor to be ignorant of its great danger. It is uniting the laboring classes of the world in sympathy.

Already, in a community which is the freest, and where expansion is indispensable, and where labor has its highest remunerations, and its most perfect freedom, the laboring classes are united, and are studiously organizing and preparing themselves to march with the great band that is filling the world. There is trouble in the future for Europe. This is a single outbreak; but it is a kind of hideous John Baptist which is going before an infernal Messiah. It is showing what is coming, to those that have an ear to hear. It may be avoided if timely heed be taken; if political power be distributed; if better ideas are inculcated with the same zeal and assiduity with which evil ideas have been; and if religion shall no longer be represented as a gorging institution of power in alliance with the State, and no longer as a part of the instruments by which the poor are made poorer, and beaten down. If religion shall come as a benign spirit, and distill like dew upon the grass and the flowers, this mischief may be anticipated and prevented; but unless there be some

timely apprehension of it, Europe is destined to a series of shocks of which this is but the *avant courier.*

The question now naturally comes home, To what extent are we, on this side, in danger of similar insurrections? If one should take the account that is given of New York (and perhaps it is not much exaggerated); if one consider what a receptacle it is of nationalities; if one considers how vast is the number of those who do not speak our language, and cannot therefore be in affinity with American ideas; if one considers what use has been made of this great underlying population; if one consider what corruption is attributed to it, or to those that manage it; if one call to mind the violations of public safety which have taken place, and the various corruptions which have been proclaimed, he will be apt to suppose that we are in imminent danger, and that we, too, may have a Paris, if not from our own population, from that which has been grafted upon us, but has not had time to grow to the parent stock.

I apprehend, however, in the first place, that our dangers in this country lie not in the direction of the lower classes, primarily. We must work a change before they will be organized in America in such a way as to be dangerous to the State. But there is danger of a wide and rapid separation of the classes in society. Since we have no classes established by law, and demarked by fixed lines on one side or the other, and since there can be no classes except those which voluntarily are formed in the struggles of men for strength and wealth, it may be supposed that there is no special danger here; but there is danger. It is always dangerous to have different parts of the population antagonistic to each other. It is dangerous that there should be a large upper class full of riches, full of pleasure, and full of leisure, and a large under class who believe themselves to be as good and as deserving, but who are empty of leisure, empty of wealth, and empty, for the most part, of all but physical pleasure. And if this country stratifies itself, and those influences prevail which separate the rich from the poor, the upper from the lower sections, in society, we shall come into very imminent perils, and very deadly ones. The extraordinary organization which is going on in capital, by which it controls, or tends to control, the legislation of the country, and the whole commerce of the country, directly or indirectly, as they are related to the political and other interests of the nation—this organization by which a new power is springing up, and developing itself in the hands of a plutocracy, of an aristocracy of wealth—this is an element of danger, and of imminent danger. It is going on in our sight, and we see the beginnings of it, though we do not see the ends. It is tending to produce divisions and

separations in our society which the strength and elasticity of our political system will scarcely be able to endure. Unless we are aroused, and timely aroused, to a consideration of this great increase of accreted power, and unless we put barriers in its way, either of legislation or of public sentiment, and stop its progress before it be swollen to despotic proportions, we shall prepare for our children and our children's children mischiefs which the imagination does not like to foresee, nor to measure.

On the other hand (not to draw the picture altogether on the dark side), we have a religion in this country which is free from the State, which belongs to the people themselves, and which is not represented by vast and powerful corruptions like that of Rome. We have a religion which springs up by the side of the cradle, and finds its sweetest sanctuary in homes where hymns and chants are sung by mothers and little children. We have in this land no proud hierarchy, with historic embellishments, knitted together—a class made sacred, and standing apart from their fellows in society. Our preachers are not priests, but *ministers*. They are brethren among brethren. Although there be interlaced, here and there, another order; although, here and there, there be progress made by hierarchical religions, in the main, the power of religion in America proceeds from those who believe in the democratic element of religious life.

So we have much to be thankful for; and much danger is warded off from us, in that our people are everywhere kindly disposed to religion. The working men in Europe have felt so many burdens, so much has been wrung out of them, they have been so shut up, and they have been so battered and beaten by what is called *religion* by the churches, that I scarcely wonder that they cherish malign feelings, feelings of animosity, against it.

It is a sad thing that the palaces are burned; but it does not transcend the imagination, how men should have such spite as they manifested in the burning of them. The boy prefigures the man. Who ever, driving the cows a-field, barefooted, and making haste, and striking his foot against a stone, has not, while suffering from the stinging pain caused by the blow, beaten the stone, that was not at fault, because it hurt him? And when men, running against the stone bulwarks of churches and cathedrals, out of which have come sharp pangs and pains, and against palaces, which, to them, have no poetic associations, and out of which have come their oppressors, and that are looked upon as horrid and hideous places which have been the dens of those oppressors—as unclean places where devouring broods of despots have swallowed up their liberties

—I do not wonder that there should be the feeling, "Put the torch to everything that tends toward the old tyrany!" It was not justified; but it may thus be explained. I do not marvel that these fanatical men should have believed that all government was oppresive and wrong. And if the working men of Paris firmly believed that they held in their hand a pattern by which happiness could be given to the world, I do not marvel that they should have said, "Better wipe out Paris as a city, and build as in a wilderness, than that it should stand fortified, and continue to oppress men, and work mischief on them." It does not justify them, but it explains how their fanaticism has turned them against their own fair city.

There is not a historic precedent, there is not a form of law, there is not a process of manhood, that could live an hour in this country, if men here had the associations which they have in France, or in Europe, in connection with the Church, or with many parts of the State. The fair fabric of this government was built in the wilderness. We bemoan our fathers' trials. We sympathize with them because they had plain food, and lived almost shelterless in the dreary winter. But ah! *we* rejoice that they were in the wilderness where no man chose to follow them, and where they could rear the pillars of government on foundations of natural justice—as they did. It was their blessing. It was the great blessing that God gave to them. The ocean was the barrier of their protection, and their insignificance was the reason why men let them alone till they had so builded that future ages might not take down what they had built. And all our laws and institutions are so founded upon right principles, that they savor of benevolence and justice and kindliness.

The religious sentiment in this country is the sentiment, not of the upper or the middle classes alone, but as much of the lower. The spirit, the inspiration, of faith, belongs to our people, down to the very bottom. Woe to that nation whose lower class, stripped of every thing on earth by men, have stripped themselves of every thing in heaven, and have no God, and no protector, and no warm bosom of faith, but sit in the chill of unbelief, shivering in their own unconscious poverty.

Then our population is not compressed as is the population in Europe. Whatever be our dangers, we shall not feel them for some time to come. The troubles that overtake men there cannot be escaped from. Men cannot run away. And so they stand still, and are ground, and irked, and irritated. Here a certain degree of inconvenience merely drives people away from one place to another. They go out of one city into another. They go out of the city into the town, and out of the town into the country.

Cheap land, that will not fail for generations to come, is the natural remedy for many of those faults which come by compression; so that we need not look for any immediate irritation and outbreak such as visits Europe.

The education, too, that our people undergo in the matter of political equality, has in it a surviving power, and is doing a work of preservation. But, after all, if we are to maintain our country in safety, we must still keep open all the channels of intelligence in this land. We are growing; and it is not a matter merely for pride, it certainly is a matter of congratulation and boasting, that we are becoming so strong in riches, and so vast in territory, and so mighty in population. But there are dangers which come with these increments. We must keep open, therefore, every channel of intelligence. An ignorant man is a dangerous man. It is in the dark, or unswept, or unwashed places that vermin breed. Where the broom and the sun come, there come not vermin. Where knowledge shines, there fanaticism is not apt to go. There growth is moderated, and becomes gradual. There experiments are few and cautious and wise.

For us, the newspaper is a greater treasure than uncounted millions of gold. If a man be worth his millions, he is all the more dangerous if he be ignorant. No nation can bear wealth that is not intelligent first. The newspaper is every year increasing in circulation; and as it increases in circulation, it increases in importance, not only as a moral power, but as a political power allied to morality, to a degree that those who conduct it do not suspect. Newspapers are to the body politic what arteries are to the human body, their function being to carry blood and sustenance and repair to every part of the body. Multiply them, and give them wider circulation. Would to God that those who conduct them might realize the full measure of their responsibility. Would to God that they had a true sense of patriotism, and a genuine love of intelligence and morality.

Then, next, the common school must be studiously employed to build up, not simply light and knowledge, but that sympathy between men which comes from their mingling together in the same sphere of life. I look upon this indirect effect of the common school as one of its blessings—particularly in this land, where so many classes are to be comminuted and mixed. The common school brings together the children of the rich and the poor, and lays the foundation for kindly interest and sympathy between them which they will never outgrow as long as they live.

I remember that the year I came to Brooklyn, I found in one of the churches a man who had been a boy alongside of me in old

Litchfield. We had gone to the unpainted brown school-house together. We had secretly whittled the benches together. We had together caught flies instead of ideas. We had played together. We had scuffled together. We had whipped each other—taking turns from day to day. And so we had grown up, he the child of an almost outcast shoemaker, and I the child of—Dr. Beecher! I had not met him for thirty years; but no sooner did he mention his name than my blood tingled, and we grasped hands as if we had had the same mother. It was because we had sat on the same bench in the common school, and had played together, when boys, although our parentage and our conditions in society were far apart—things which boys know but little about. And I think we cannot over-estimate that sympathy which comes from the mingling of the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak. The common school lays the foundation among boys for a knowledge of each other, a confidence in each other, and a sympathy with each other, which will not wear out during their whole life.

I believe in colleges, and academies, and select and high schools; but I would rather see all of them perish than to see the common school perish. I would fain have the common school made so strong and so good, so large and so luminous, so full of the marrow of good things, that they who dwell in the neighborhood of it, no matter how rich they may be, cannot afford to send their children anywhere else. Make that which you do for the common people better than that which can be done by select classes in the community for themselves. They are doing this in Massachusetts, and especially in Boston. Make such provision for the education of the commonest common people, that the richest uncommon people will come suppliantly and ask for their children the privilege of participating in the advantages of the common school. Do not destroy the common school. And keep it *common*. Bring everybody to it, and let them there learn each other's brotherhood. And thus, society, beginning and passing through the common school, will form sympathetic associations which will go on unfolding themselves afterward, and which will no more be forgotten by men than the wide-spreading branches of a tree forget the roots from which all their magnificence draws sustenance.

We must also renew and increase in our land respect for law; and therefore law-making must be made respectable. We must teach our children to have more regard for civil administration; and therefore we must see to it that civil administration is worthy of the regard of honest children and youth. We must bring a noble spirit of heroism to bear upon the administration of public

affairs, and see to it that the commonwealth shall not come to shame by reason of the infidelity of its various members.

We must give force to every religious influence, also. We must have a religion which inspires self-restraint; which widens the horizon by adding to the spiritual and the beautiful of the present; which inspires a feeling of responsibility to God, and of true brotherhood among men. It is quite an insignificant question, whether this or that creed be right. It is quite insignificant, whether men are descended in an authorized line, or whether they have liberty to develop themselves without historic lineage. These things have some interest; but that which concerns every man in the religion of the country, is, that it shall inspire self-restraint, whatever be its creed. It should be a religion that makes men spiritual, and inculcates in them a wholesome belief in the life to come, and controls the life that now is. It should be a religion that inspires a feeling of responsibility to God. Nothing holds a man to such care of himself, nothing holds a man to such probity, and nothing, therefore, is such a guarantee of his safety, as the feeling, "I must give account of myself before God." And whatever may be your particular faith, whatever be your method and polity, see to it that the religion which breathes from your church shall inspire self-restraint, belief in immortality, responsibility to God, and brotherhood among men.

Beware of religious faiths that separate men. Beware of religious faiths that put forth a hand bearing a flail, and go into life beating down, beating down, and beating down each other. Look for those religious administrations that draw men together; that inspire good will; that teach patience and gentleness and forbearance. Look for sweetness, and not for bitterness. Look for a forgiving spirit, and not for unrelentingness. Demand and secure, in the religion of the coming day, in the church that is to be, all that there is of mercifulness without impugning the strictness of justice; all that there is of gentleness without taking from the strength of the bones of responsibility.

So, if we give liberty to the whole people; if we educate them, and inspire them with a true intelligence; and if, above all, we crown their material acquisitions, and all that education gives them, with a sincere love for God and love for man, we shall have a people that is competent to grow, making wood such that the tree will be able to bear the beating upon it of the elements, and that the winter and summer storms which rock it shall make it elastic, but shall not break it.

Meanwhile, let us not forget those who are in bonds as bound

with them. Let us not read with eager and credulous eyes, and with morbid enjoyment, of the horrors that are taking place in other lands. What mothers' hearts are sacked! The burning of the Tuileries is sad; but the suffering of one desolated heart is sadder. The murder of multitudes of misguided men is horrible; but not the dead should command our pity. Those that live demand our compassion. Mourn for them. Think of the little children that are made orphans. Think of the girls that have no protectors. Think of the poverty of those who are left to suffer without work and without hope. Pity the Government. Pity the poor persons. And pity, too, the ignorant, the misguided, the mistaken, who have been inflamed to cruelty, following an *ignis fatuus*. Still they are our brothers, and their mistakes, and all the hideous cruelties to which their mistakes have led them, should not alienate our thoughts of them. Pray for them.

Pray for all men, and learn to feel that wherever a human heart suffers, even in the uttermost parts of the round world, there you have an errand, and there your heart should bear you in prayer to God, saying,

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We humble ourselves before thee, our Father, for all thy greatness and all thy goodness, which make us feel how unworthy we are of such parentage. It is not our fault that we are smaller than thou, nor that we are not greater than the design of thy creation hath made us; but it is in the use of the powers which thou hast given us that we perceive how far short we have come of knowledge. We have not that which we might have had, nor have we walked in the light of it, nor restrained ourselves according to the law that is in our inner parts. We have not known the way of peace, to pursue it. We have gone aside to do evil. Again and again, and often, when we knew it to be evil by the sharp-piercing penalties which it brought, we have still been drawn to it, and have had occasion to mourn over our own folly and our own guilt, our blindness and our infatuation. But we rejoice, while we make mention of our own estate, that we are speaking to One who is full of condescension, full of compassion, abhorring evil, but not the evil-doer; seeking to rescue, but not to condemn; seeking to bring near and to reform, but not to cast off and to refuse. We rejoice in thy graciousness. Our hope is in thee. For we are not ourselves strong to do good. And though we have aspirations many, how much do they mock and rebuke us, rather than draw us upward! How much better can we see the right than perform it! How much do we behold the ideal life! and yet how little do we enter into it! By the grace of God we must be forgiven for the past, strengthened in the present, and helped in the future. And to thy strength we bow ourselves, acknowledging thy goodness and thy sparing mercy. And we commend ourselves still to that same tender care, and that same divine love, praying that thou wilt do exceeding abundantly more for us than we can ask or think. We pray that thou wilt grant us the blessing of those hopes which bring us near to thee, and wed us to thy government.

And grant that these same hopes may spring up intelligently in the hearts of all this great people. We pray that this nation may be a God-fearing nation; that thy laws may not be burst asunder, and thy cords cast away from us. May we rather give heed to thy laws, and walk in them, that we may have the favor of God, and that prosperity which that favor always brings. Pity those that are weak, and that have been despoiled. Pity those that are ignorant. Having eyes, they see not; and ears, they hear not; and a heart, they do not understand. And yet, minister unto them. Stir up thy people, we beseech of thee. Become their Instructor and their Saviour. And we pray that all those who are scattered wide abroad throughout this great land, and are gradually growing compactly into national life, may be pervaded by a true religious feeling of love to each other, by a generous regard for the welfare of the whole, and by an intelligent judgment of duty.

And we pray that the prosperity of this nation may not ungird it, and lead it to dissoluteness of life. We pray that thou wilt grant that it may be established in righteousness. And while we look abroad upon nations that are drinking blood and passing away, we pray that we may not forget our own suffering, or the dark days and trying hours which we have known, and that we may not arrogate to ourselves such superiority over others, because for this hour we are secure and they are tempest-tossed and not comforted.

We pray for all the nations of the earth. Pity and spare those which thou art chastising, and bind up where thou hast bruised, and establish again the goings of those who have been cast down.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that religion may break forth from all the forms that have encased it, and from all that has tarnished it or sullied its loveliness, and that it may become the portion of all men, that from the bosom of God they may learn justice, and temperance, and forbearance with each other, and kindness, and all things that make for peace.

We pray, O Lord! that thou wilt grant, if it be thy righteous will, that progress may go forward, not by revolution, but by reformation. May statesmen be endowed with wisdom from on high, and may the people have patience to wait for the growth of better things, and not rudely snatch at the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and bring down upon themselves condign punishment.

We pray, O Lord! that thou wilt turn the hearts of men everywhere toward each other. We pray that rapine, and hatred, and all forms of mischief which men inflict upon each other may pass away. Come, O bright day of promise! when the glory of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters fill the sea.

May we pray from day to day, and more fervently than ever, *Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done upon earth as it is in heaven.*

Wilt thou prepare us for the services of the evening; for the lessons of instruction to which we may be drawn.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that the spirit of the Sabbath may go with us through all the week. Be with us while we live. And grant, at last, that when we are called to the solemn hour of death, we may exchange worlds joyfully, and go singing to our home. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praise evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt add thy blessing to the word spoken. Grant that we may from thy providence draw lessons of knowledge and wisdom to guide our steps. Grant, we beseech of thee, to this great people, the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. As thou didst give thy presence to our fathers; as thou didst lead them to wise results; as in all times of peril thou hast guided our necessities, so we commend to thee this land again, God of our fathers, praying that thou wilt be the God of their children. And while we hail, and accept gladly, with sincere hospitality, the multitudes, almost countless, that are rushing hither from the narrow circumstances and the oppressions of foreign lands, Lord, save us, we beseech of thee. Grant that they may bring to us, not vices, to inoculate us with. May we, rather, have virtues that shall be able to sustain them. Grant, we pray thee, that we may mingle kindly, doing each other good. And may their children and our children, interlaced, go on in later days, building on the same foundations, gathering fruit from the same tree of liberty, worshiping with the same faith, and believing in the same God.

We pray that thou wilt overrule all tendencies to excess, to luxury, to self-indulgence. And wilt thou overrule all tendencies toward the development of unjust power, and toward the oppression of men. Purge our land. Purify our administrations. And grant that this may be a God-fearing land, and that thy blessing may rest upon it, and that all the nations of the earth, beholding, may worship thee, and draw near to thee, and find thee the Friend of the poor, the Deliverer of the captive, and the Builder-up of those who are laid waste.

And to thy name shall be all the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

SUSPENDED MORAL CONVICTIONS.

"Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."—JOHN xii., 42, 43.

THE scene which these words develop took place among the very last days of our Master upon earth before his crucifixion. He had finished his Galilean ministry. In Galilee he spent by far the largest part of the time that he spent upon earth. He had come down, now, to Judæa, and to Jerusalem, to fill up the immortal days of passion; and he stood on the very eve of this great manifestation of divine love and divine power. No one, who has made it his business to look closely into it, will fail to be struck with the deepening and widening of the teachings of the Saviour as time went on. Whether it was simply that, like men, he was growing deeper and wider by practice and years, or whether it was designed that he should emit light in proportion as men were able to receive it, the fact is, unquestionably, that his declarations were higher, broader, and more extraordinary, every week of the last six months of his life. They began, if I may so say, in the hills of Galilee. The river Amazon begins in the mountains, by slender streams, many but confluent; and the river grows until the breadth of it at its mouth is such that from the channel one cannot see the shore on either side; and in the last days of Christ his inspirations outran moral experience, rising higher than any man could follow them, and sinking deeper than that any plummet of human thought could sound them. The very mysticism of John's Gospel consists in this: that it is attempting to orb to us thoughts that are of infinite experience, and that so transcend men's higher experiences that they are impossible to us.

Now, there were many among the Jews—the common people—who heard Jesus gladly, we know. They heard him because they had nothing to risk. They heard him because he accompanied his instructions with works of mercy that won upon their sympathies and

SUNDAY MORNING, May 28 1871. LESSON: JOHN XII., 30-50. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 24, 514, 898.

hearts. He was their physician. He also provided largely for their wants. He carried, from first to last, the great mass of the sympathetic common people with him. And there was no period in Christ's teaching and life in which there were not a select part of the Pharisees who believed in him. Some few were willing to own it, but the greater part were not. Toward the close of his life, as he came more and more in contact with the higher orders of the Pharisees that same experience attended him. The great body of them, from party earnestness as well as personal antipathies, rejected Christ's teachings and assumptions. There were some who regarded them; but they were such men as Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, and others like them—just men; deep-hearted men; men wont to ponder moral questions; men that had soul-hunger; men of genuine religious aspiration; men that could not if they would, and that would not if they could, free themselves from the solemn overshadowing of eternal truths.

While the great multitude of the Pharisees rejected Christ utterly, they vehemently contested him, and sought his destruction. There were here and there many men that believed. And the question is, Why did they not openly espouse his cause and give strength to it? We have been accustomed to take sides with Christ. His cause has been adopted by us, and we are almost partisans for Christianity. We take sides against everybody who took sides against Christ in the old times.

In one sense this is right. In another sense we shall not touch the bottom of things unless we can by sympathy and dramatic interpretation put ourselves among those that stood outside of the charmed circle, and look at Christ as they did, and reason on their conduct from what we know of the great motives that actuate the average of human conduct. It certainly was a great moral weakness, to use the mildest term, on the part of those of the Pharisaic body who believed in Christ, not openly to avow their faith in him. But we must not suppose that they were so very bad, measured according to our estimate of good or bad among men. They were rulers of the synagogue; and they were the "chief rulers," it is said. That is, they were men that stood among the very highest of the officers of the synagogue. The Temple could exist only in one place—namely, in Jerusalem; and the Temple never provided instruction for the people, but simply sacrificial worship. That was its solitary function. The synagogue provided instruction, but never sacrifice. Synagogues existed in every considerable neighborhood; and there were a great many of them in old Jerusalem. I suppose the synagogue was substantially the model upon which the

apostles early framed the Christian church; and I suppose that the early officers of the Christian church occupied substantially the same positions and performed substantially the same functions which the apostles had been accustomed to in their synagogical experiences.

Our Master availed himself of the synagogues every Sabbath day. He, as we now say, attended church at the synagogue. He became a teacher. Frequently intelligent men were called out of the audience to read the Scriptures and to expound them; and he often performed this service; and thus he became not only familiar with the usages of the synagogue, but with the principal characters of the synagogues throughout the country. These rulers were among the most honored men of that time. To be an elder or a ruler in the synagogue, and a chief one at that, was to go nearly as high as an ordinary Jew could aspire to go in the ranks of his own countrymen.

Now, we must not judge of the conduct of the men who occupied that official relation to the synagogue, by our views of Christ. We have never had any doubt in respect to his divinity, for the most part. From our childhood we have seen him, not as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but as glorified. A halo hangs in our imagination round about his head when we think of him; and he is the openly-declared, and by ages honored, Christ. But he came among his countrymen born in the most inconspicuous circumstances, trained among the poorest of the people, and without the advantages of education which belonged to the higher classes. He came in ways that tended to shock many of the prejudices of his own people. He was an extremist, judging purely by external measurements. He came as a reformer, uttering disagreeable truths that jarred against the conceit and the vanity and much of the patriotic feeling of the Jews. And he stirred up their vindictive and malign passions—for they were strong in that direction. He came apparently disowned by the leaders of his people. Yet he represented historic Judaism. He was in accord with Moses and the Mosaic institutes. Nevertheless, he was a disturber. And when men in official relations looked at him, he seemed to them an extraordinary man. But they did not know how he would turn out, or which way he would go. And it was very natural that, being guided by their lower nature, they should hold themselves in reserve—particularly as Jesus had formed no external church as separate from the Jewish church. It is a striking fact that he never gathered about him, and never organized, any band of men. Even the disciples were not organized. There was no order, no rank, no

precedence, among them. They were simply twelve companions united in a common cause, as twelve men gathered casually together by elective affinity would go on a journey of days and days, not organized, but loosely co-hering by their sympathies. There was no organized church, nor *any* church, in Christ's time. There was no preparation for a future external, visible kingdom. There was no plan of organization laid down. There was no mode of worship prescribed. Christ was a pure spiritualist. He taught men the innermost truths. He almost may be said to have neglected the external forms which truths must put on. He left the externalities of religion to take care of themselves. Where any inward thought tended to give itself an outward form, he let it do so according to its own nature. He dealt with principles, with truths, with great spiritual elements. And it is not strange that men should not like to commit themselves to a man who represented nothing but an intangible and ill-apprehended spiritual tendency—especially as he was in such disrepute. The state of feeling was such in regard to Christ, that it would have brought them into collision, and perhaps into quarrel, with those of their own class who had *esprit de corps*, if they had identified themselves with him. The spirit of their class was such that these men were slow to break away from them for the sake of adhering to Christ. It would have put in jeopardy their peace, their harmony, their property and their reputation.

There was another thing. Probably they were men who were tired of disquiet. All their days there had been revolutions breaking out incessantly in one shape or another. Wild hopes that the Messiah had come would start the people now and then, in this direction or in that direction ; and they had been stirred up so much that doubtless then, as now, there were many thoughtful and cautious men who were tired of these perpetual disturbances, and these pretentious reformations, that ended in nothing.

To this must also be added that disposition which many men have, not to be in any doubtful or uncompleted development. There are some men who love the front line, who love novelty, and who run after things that are different from what has been known before. There are other men who are the reverse in their tendencies. They love the rear line because it is safest. There are men who naturally run to action. There are other men who are naturally spectators of action. There are men who tend to *do ;* and there are other men who tend to *think*. Without doubt many of these men were of a reflective cast of mind, who did not love to commit themselves.

So, then, when you look at it from the standpoint of human ex-

perience, they did not act in any extraordinary manner—not differently from what men are acting every day. And I think before I am through you will detect in yourselves the same lines of reasoning; the same conservative tendencies; the same gulf between moral intuitions and the development of them into overt life, and into declarations before men.

Theirs was a case of suspended moral consciousness. They saw Christ perform his works of mercy, and believed in them. They heard his discourses, and felt the truth and the power of them. In the main, they thought it most probable, almost certain, that he was a man sent from God. And if they could have been disconnected from all the circumstances around about them, and could have felt at liberty, as men say, to act according to their own private feelings without regard to their social connections, I have no doubt that they would have ranged themselves on the side of Jesus, and rejoiced to have been his disciples. They saw, they sympathized, they believed; but they stood still. They did not allow their moral convictions to issue, either in personal conduct, or in declarations of belief; so that the effect which was wrought by the truth upon their minds never came to fruit—at any rate, never during his life-time. It was held in suspense. It was not permitted to go through its natural and proper evolutions.

The same causes are producing the same effects still. There are multitudes of men who do not allow their best feelings and their best nature to develop to the full. They keep their heart in suspense. Their moral consciousness is far more clearly developed on the right side than their life is. Multitudes of men are worse than their seeming; multitudes also are far better than their seeming; that is is to say, their interior consciousness is more orthodox, their interior desires are more nearly spiritual, their secret aspirations and ambitions point far higher, than you would suspect from anything that you see outwardly.

There are men who are more or less a-preaching of the Gospel; who look upon society not with a careless eye; who have deep natures; whose outward characters are an index of the work that is going on in them; though after all they hold back from forming definite convictions, they hide themselves from the truth. There are men also who, though they do not hide themselves from the truth, hide themselves from the results to which the truth ought to lead them. Both of these classes we shall consider briefly.

Some men have a sensitive and interpreting conscience; and this has, as all moral sentiments have, a kind of prophecy in it.

All strong moral feelings have a sort of moral prescience. They foresee, in a dim, nebulous way. Therefore it was said by our Saviour, "Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." Men have a kind of consciousness that if they were to accept certain truths, those truths would compel them to forsake certain pleasures; but they think that there would be such an inconsistency between their practical course and their inward feelings that they could not endure it; and they are not prepared to change their course. They are under full sail; they think that their outward success lies in the direction in which they are going; they are in the tide of power; and they have a consciousness that if they were to yield to what they see to be right they would lose the aims and ambitions of their life; and they are not prepared to take that step. They know that if they were to open their minds to the full illumination of the truth, it would bring them into such controversy with themselves that they could not endure it. Such men will not let the truth come to them. There are hundreds of men who say within themselves, "If I ever should become a Christian, I know I should live very differently from what I do now." Oftentimes their humility leads them to say, "I should live much better than other Christians around about me are living." There is no telling how men would live if they were Christians. You can only tell how they have lived after they have become Christians. Living a Christian life is no easy task—especially for those who have been long in the indulgence of wrong courses.

So it is that thousands of men who do not reject the teachings of Christians; who are not opposed to the church; who are in favor of morality; who revere the memory of their parents because they were pious people; and who believe in much that they hear, and feel much that belongs to the truth—so it is that thousands of such men are perpetually holding themselves in suspense. They will not permit themselves to come to any clear and definite apprehension of truth as it is related to their character. Nothing is more common than to see men who are utterly godless shed tears at hymns. Men who are living very wicked lives will read the prophecies, will read the sublime passages of Scripture in respect to God's moral sublimity, and it will be like music to them. Frequently men will hear preaching, who do not expect it will bring them to a practical decision. What they want is, that it shall play on those deeper chords which vibrate in them. And they have so much of moral nature held in abeyance, in suspense, that it is grateful to them to have that moral nature played upon by poetry and eloquence, only so that it does

not bring them to a decision, to a clear, decided conviction as to the way of duty, and prepare them for revolution in the way of conduct. Up to that point they believe in truth, and love to think about it; and sometimes they say to themselves, "I wonder if I am as bad a man as I have supposed that I was, and as I am told that I am? I like hymns; I like to read the Bible; I do read it more than folks think I do; and it may be, after all, that when I die I shall wake up and see how good I was on earth." Many men have times of this misty soliloquy with themselves.

It is one thing to have an ethical sensibility, and it is another thing to have practical moral piety. It is one thing to have a nature that rejoices in the excitement of moral appeals. It is another thing to bring those moral appeals to bear upon your dispositions, upon your ruling purposes in life, and upon your conduct. It is moral sentiment *applied* that makes a Christian man; and the mere susceptibility to moral subjects does not indicate that you are good, nor that you are not bad. A man may love to have hymns poured over him, as if they were sweet perfume; a man may love sermons; a man may love all things in the church that are sober and temperate; a a man may love to indulge in deep thoughts and feelings, so that they do not come to the point of decision; so that they do not break him off from courses that he does not mean to break off from—a man may do all this, and there may be no operative and practical results in his case. I do not say that this is worse than nothing. I say that it is not sufficient. I say that it is a crude and undeveloped state of moral sensibility. I say that it is not enough to save a man. It will not ripen him. It is not bad. It is good. It is much better than nothing. It should be cherished. You ought to be glad for so much. The time will come, it may be, when all these impressions and sensibilities will result in decisions that will bring you to a consistent, practical development of Christian life; but at present they are inchoate. They are not developed and brought into action. They come short of what is necessary to make you a Christian. Yours is a case of suspended animation, or semi-consciousness. You are in a half sensitive state of conscience, or moral feeling. You purposely hold your convictions in subjection. You will not let them come to light. You know what the truth is, and what it requires; but you will not decide to act in accordance with it, because you know, as well as though it had been told you, that if you were to come to such a decision, you would have to change your life; and you do not want to change it.

For example: I am shaving notes for a living; and I am making a good thing of it. I am convinced that it is not right. I know that

it is hardening my heart. I know that it is searing my conscience. I know that I am coming to look on men very much as vultures look on birds, only with the thought to eat them. I know that I am not cultivating toward them a spirit of kind sympathy, and sweet pity, and loving helpfulness, and cheerful willingness to suffer in their behalf. I know, on the contrary, that I am growing rich on other men's misfortunes. Nobody comes to my shambles who is not in trouble; and when a man comes to me in trouble, I gauge the amount which I will exact of him by the degree of his trouble. The first time he comes he will allow twenty-five per cent.; the next time thirty-three per cent.; and, perhaps, as a last resort, he will go as high as fifty per cent.; and I try him there. Every time he comes back he makes up his mind to go a figure higher. He does it to-day, he does it to-morrow, he keeps doing it; and I watch him, and take advantage of his misfortunes as they come on him.

This is legal; it is perfectly right so far as the law is concerned: the only mischief in it is, that it kills at both ends—at the breech and at the muzzle. A man under such circumstances is not only taking the life-blood out of his victim, but is at the same time taking the blood of humanity out of his own spirit and soul. He is being killed dead. And yet he will not change his course. He is conscious that he has feelings which would rise up and lead him in a different direction; but he is not willing to be guided by them, and so he suppresses them. There is a great deal of buried manhood in him; and frequently the old bitter spirit comes up; the conviction of his wrong conduct forces itself upon him; a chance visit to the sanctuary brings him to himself; and he says, "I cannot go to this church and keep on in the way that I am traveling. I must either leave this church or leave my business. I cannot take both. So I will not go to church." Thus he reasons. He foresees that if he gives himself up to what he believes to be true, that if he permits himself to be influenced by those thoughts and feelings which tend to liberalize a man, to sweeten his disposition, and to plant love where selfishness grows, he will be obliged to forego this most profitable occupation. And he says, "What should I do then?" Men stand over against their moral convictions, and say, "I know that this business is wrong; but if I should give it up, what would become of my wife and children?" A man ought to think that the very poorest benefit that he can confer upon his wife and children is to make them outwardly rich and inwardly disgraced by a course which he would not like to talk about, or have them talk about.

Then the next natural step in a mind that is not utterly perverted, is where conviction has been allowed to take hold, and has

become active, and where there has been a process of suspending moral consciousness between a conviction of the truth and the appropriate development of that conviction into outward action. Here is a very large class of persons—and a great many of them are parishioners of mine—who are clearly settled in their judgments in respect to the truth, but who hang back and hesitate, and do not make themselves known as Christians. And I wish to address a few words to them. I am not preaching a sermon purely of criticism. I am preaching a sermon of sympathy just as well. I would be glad to enter into your feelings, and show you how your mind is working, and why it is that you are not out and out, open, declared Christian men. Very many of you are ripe in believing. You only need to let your belief begin to take hold on action. Then you will be in the right way.

There are men who go for months and for years with a moral sense far in advance of anything which they allow to appear in their active life. There are men who have thoughts which they never speak, but which roll as deep as the tides of the sea. There are men who pray to God, and whose prayers I believe are acceptable, but who do not tell the dearest friend they have on earth that there is a channel of supply open between the Throne and their needy souls. There are men who are conscious of their delinquencies, who are conscious of their weaknesses and their wickednesses, who are humbled within themselves, who confess their faults before God, who ponder these things, who live in the shadow of the life to come, and who inwardly experience something of spirituality, but who never say, "I know that I am unworthy; I know that I am sinful; I know that it is the grace of God that is helping me." There are men who really do believe that their souls are pardoned, who really believe that at the foot of the cross they have felt the cleansing blood of atonement, who really believe that Jesus Christ is related intimately to them, but who do not avow his name, and are not anywhere known as his children. They wear the crown immortal; but it casts out no light; and no one knows that they wear it.

Now, why should there be men who come to a conviction of the truth, and of its moral bearings, and stand still? Why should men be like many of the chief rulers of the synagogue, who believed in Christ, but would not confess him? Why should there be so many who believe in the divinity and power of the Lord Jesus Christ, but who will not acknowledge him?

There are many who I suppose are kept back from an open avowal of the Lord Jesus Christ by motives which are mistaken, but which are not so unworthy or so disgraceful. There are many

who are kept back, I verily believe, by an exceedingly sensitive conscience, acting in directions of false doctrine or false information. There are, for instance, persons who think that a Christian life is a thing so different from what it really is, that it would be a falsity for them to say, "I am a Christian." Their education has led them to believe that no man is a Christian who has not been brought into the kingdom of God with an out-breaking, impetuous experience.

There are certain kinds of goods that men will not buy unless they have a given trade-mark. They look for that, and if they find it they will buy the goods; and if they cannot find it they will not buy them. And many persons think that Christian experience has a trade-mark, which consists in first being plunged down into darkness, and then bolted up into the light, and with such vivid impressiveness that one can almost remember, by the clock, the minute and the second when the event took place.

A man says, "Such a person, when he was converted, was at first swept like a meteor into a gulf of despair, and then shot like a comet into the realm of hope and peace and comfort; but I never had any experience like that; and why should I say that I am a Christian?" And so men's consciences stand in their way. They cannot profess to be Christians because they have not gone through the process which they suppose to be indispensable to a genuine conversion.

Yet, if you look at the history of those who followed the Lord Jesus Christ; if you look at the history of the apostles and others who became Christ's disciples, you shall find that for the most part they had no such out-breaking and up-breaking experiences as those to which I have alluded. They came under the influence of the Saviour, and into personal affiliation with him and with his work, in an even quiet way, without any exact recognition of the time when the change was wrought.

Where one is brought into the Christian life tumultuously, and there are precise marks which may be thus noted, I do not undervalue them. I do not say that persons who are converted in an uproarious way are not truly converted. But I do say that persons who have a sense of truth, who have an aspiration for that which is right, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, however gentle their experience may be, have a right to call themselves Christ's disciples, and have a right to live openly the life which they are endeavoring to live secretly.

Nothing is more illusive, and nothing is more difficult to manage, than a conscience illuminated by ideality, or imagination, as some would call it—that faculty or power in us by which we dis-

cern invisible things, and by which our conceptions are raised, lifted, carried up, beautified, glorified. An idealized conscience is always raising the conception of duty. It is always raising the standard of right. It is always magnifying things so that when men look upon the best of their thoughts and feelings, and measure them by an idealized standard, the difference is so wide between what they are and what they ought to be, that they say in themselves, "It would be presumption in me to pretend that I am a Christian."

A painter who had lived in the provinces, and who had acquired some little reputation in his own neighborhood, and had never seen a master's picture, went to Rome, and stood before the works of Titian and Raphael. He gazed at them long and silently, and at last he said, "*I*, too, am a painter." There is a whole history in that. He had been painting where he could not compare himself with anybody else; and now his feeling of aspiration led him to say this, as he looked upon the works of acknowledged artists. It was not inconsistent with humility. He felt that the artist talent was in him, too, and that if he could not equal those pictures, he could approach toward them. And he said, "If those men are artists, then I am an artist. It may be that I am at the bottom of the scale; but I have some of *the same thing* in me which there is in them."

And so there are men who have in them impulses that are powerfully drawing them upward; they have an honorable ambition; they have spiritual etherealizations; their sense of duty is transcendently high; and oh! that they might at last look upon Christ Jesus in such a way that they should see in themselves something of him, here and there, and be able to say, "Well, I am Christ's man—a very poor one, a very imperfect one, but nevertheless his."

There are many persons kept back from an open Christian life for months and years, and sometimes during their whole lives, who say, "How can I go into the Church, and profess my faith in that long and intricate scheme of doctrines? I cannot." "Oh! but," people say to them, "it is not understood that you profess these things. They are for the ministers." "Yet, they say, it is generally understood that the members assent to them, and people will think that I believe them when I do not; and I cannot give my assent to such doctrines. I am profoundly conscious of the sinfulness of my nature; I am profoundly conscious of my need of grace and love and salvation in Jesus Christ; and I am willing to live according to his wish; I would be willing to say that much, but I cannot go beyond that."

Brethren, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ ought to be so largely made, it ought to be organized in such a way, that any soul that wants to follow Christ can, without violating its letter or its spirit, come in and say, "I am Christ's for life and death." The church ought not to be burdened with such doctrines and dogmas and complicated governments that men should be compelled to stand outside of it all their life long, saying, "I desire to follow Christ, but I dare not take upon myself the avowal of such a ritual of beliefs as the church prescribes." Following Christ is a life-work, and not at first a philosophical work—though that may come afterward.

There are many who wish to live Christianly, but who do not wish to be held responsible according to the Christian standard. There are a great many who look at the way in which church-members live, and criticise them severely (a thing which is not very amiable), saying, "I endeavor in every part of my life to conform to Christian morals; I try to govern my tongue; I try to control my temper; I try to conduct my business according to the best light that I can get; I try to regulate my life as I think a Christian man ought to; and I try to bring my children up after the highest model." I say to them, Why not add to that, "Christ is my model, and I live by faith of the Son of God," for the comfort of those around about you? They say, "I do not feel that I could take on myself the open responsibility." These are men that make secret marriages with Christ.

There have been princes who, for reasons of State, did not dare to openly follow their real affection, but secretly married themselves to the women whom their hearts loved. They entered into the marriage relation, but never avowed it. They wanted the comfort of heart which came from that relation, but they kept it secret, because they did not want to stand before the State and be condemned as having formed a *mésalliance.*

There are many who want to have a secret alliance with the Lord Jesus Christ; who want to have all the sympathy and succoring benedictions which come from faith in him; but who do not want to avow it openly, because they do not choose to stand before men committed to all that Christianity is popularly supposed to imply. Sometimes men give this a better name than I do; but where men are living, or trying to live, a Christian life, I think they ought honestly to say, "I am living this life, so far as I am living it at all, by the faith and help of the Son of God."

Then there are many who are kept back from following their convictions of duty, and living an open life of Christian faith, by affection—not affection to God, but affection to their friends. There

is many a loving woman who is secretly living a Christian life, but who is waiting before she makes an avowal of her faith, until she can bring her husband with her. There is many a woman who is full of prayer, and full of faith, and full of the purest Christian virtues, but all of whose household—her father, her mother, her brothers and sisters—all with whom she stands connected—are opposed to her. And her heart is rent. She cannot endure to separate herself from them as she feels that she will be obliged to if she publicly joins herself to the people of God. It would require a great deal of heroism for one thus situated to do it. I can conceive of one who has been brought up shrinkingly, exquisitely sensitive, who has formed unfortunate alliances, and who has twined her heart about those who do not sympathize with her in her religious aspirations, and finds it hard to rise up and break away from them all, and make known to the world that she is Christ's, engaging actively and earnestly in duties which separate between them and her. This is indeed taking up the cross. There are many that could die with fewer pangs than they could live and let it be known that they were Christians. And yet Christ says, "He that will not confess me before men I will not confess before God."

"If you do not love me enough to have it known," a suitor might well say, "then you do not love me enough to have me." And Christ says in substance, "If you do not love me enough to take me first, and in preference to all other things, then your love is not a fit mate for mine." And yet, many persons are held back from an open and devout Christian life by the sweetest affections, but affections that are drawing the wrong way.

There are many sympathetic natures that take their shape and direction in life very much from those who are around them—men that are not only to be blamed, but also much to be pitied.

If you stand a bar of iron in heat like that of yesterday or to-day, it expands, but not to a degree that will be appreciable to the senses. If, however, you put alongside of it a thermometer, how the expanding mercury goes driving up the tube! How marked and apparent are the changes which take place in the mercury! During the night, the iron bar contracts again; but the contraction is so gradual and so small that no one can see it. The mercury in the thermometer, on the other hand, goes down, and goes down in such a way that everybody who looks on can see that it moves.

Now, all persons who are converted are affected. Some are as sensitive to influences that are brought to bear upon them as the thermometer is to heat and cold; and they rise and fall all the time. They are constantly warped and biased. As the musical instrument

is played upon by the hand of the musician, so they are played upon and hindered by sympathetic influences. They would, if, fortunately for them there was any current setting toward the confession of their faith, be swept on by it; but if it were necessary for them to go forth alone, as often as they stepped out they would be drawn back again. If their purpose is fresh in the morning, it dies before evening. If on the Sabbath day they are persuaded, before the week is passed they are unpersuaded. Their heart is like a bay of the sea, into which the tide runs, and out of which it runs again, alternately, forever vacillating, forever changing.

To these must be added those who are affected by the love of praise, the instinct of self-interest, and those ten thousand social influences which interfere with the clarity of a man's judgment, the wisdom of his purposes, and the simplicity of his self-devotion. All these elements are working on men, and holding them back, so that there are hundreds and thousands who stand for years without having that royal Name associated with them—men who are not far from the kingdom of God, and who are secretly attempting to live a Christian life.

There are in this congregation a great many men of that kind—men whose convictions need nothing; men whose judgments are sufficiently clear; men whose hearts are on the side of the truth and of the Christian church, but who have not openly espoused the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are many times in which they accept the Saviour; there are many times when they commune with Jesus; there are many times when they are conscious of having Christian experiences; but they do not rise up, and come out boldly, and put their names on the roll of Christ's followers, and range themselves under his banner, and own him as the Captain of their salvation.

In view of this exposition, I remark, first, that there are many persons who have a large treasure, a vast mine of wealth, within them, of which they are themselves scarcely conscious, and which they certainly never improve to any such extent as it might be improved. I think that now there are many persons out of the church who are as good or better than many that are in it. I think there are many persons who do not believe themselves Christians, who are better than many who do believe themselves Christians. And I think they are culpable for their indiscreet conservatism. The character of their inward experience indicates that they are living a life of faith; and frequently they stand much higher in their Christian attainments than many who are ostentatiously Christians. Now it is their business to let the source of those attainments be known.

There are many men in whose souls is a spark of the divine nature; but they never bring it out and let it shine. It lies hidden away in them, and nobody except themselves knows that it is there. There are many men deep down in whose natures, under all their manifold imperfections, is a point and center of palpitating love and faith; and oh, that they would uncover it and let the light of God's countenance illumine it! There are many persons who are living Christian lives under difficult circumstances, who ought to come out and say, "I am a Christian, and I wish to join the company of those who are going to heaven."

One of the most favorite pears in the market is the *Duchesse d'Angoulême*, which was a wilding and grew in a hedge, and was a hedge plant, until one day the proprietor, going to visit his provincial farm, saw the fruit, and tasted it, and was delighted with it. So he determined to transplant it; and he cleared away the hedge, took it up, carried it into his garden, and cultivated it. The result was that it became almost the pear of the world. And it was fitting that, instead of being allowed to bloom and bear its luscious fruit in obscurity, it should have been brought into the garden where it could be seen, and where its fruit could be enjoyed.

I think there are magnificent fruit-trees growing in hedges yet, which might well be taken out and put where there is a better soil and a better exposure, so that they might spread their branches unchecked by surrounding growths. There are many persons in society who have gone under the influence of secondary and lower feelings so long, that there has a kind of crust formed over their real character, which hides it. There are people of all degrees and classes of goodness and badness, but nobody is perfect. And among these there is a very large class whose outside is bad, and whose inside is good. Like chestnuts, they are hard to deal with, but are excellent when they are out of the burr. There are many persons whose external life, whose practical life, whose life in the school in which they have been brought up, and in the career which they have followed, is justly damnable, but in whom, after all, there are sweet dispositions, and who really are actuated by an internal sense of honor and manliness. These better traits have not been discovered, and brought out and developed; but they are in them. And if there could be some influence brought to bear upon them which should lead them to break through the outer crust which envelops them; if that could be brought out which lies slumbering in them; if their moral consciousness, where their true manhood resides, could be brought into vigorous exercise, they would be transformed almost in the twinkling of an eye.

I believe that among bad men (and there are a great many bad men) there are not a few that have the capacity of being very good, if somebody would take them by the hand, and say to them, "You are carrying immortal treasures in you, but a little below the surface; and if God's grace could but set on fire your better nature which lies hidden beneath an unlovely exterior, it would give forth a light which would guide you to the very land of immortality."

Are there not some here who swear, and are careless about the Sabbath, and are not altogether particular about their companions, but who find themselves bound by rigorous conceptions of personal honor and personal duty, of truth and fidelity, and who, in the hour of trial, when sickness comes into the neighborhood, are ready to lay down their life for the sake of others, and who cannot endure to see persons persecuted, and will stand between the victim and his oppressor, and will go out of their way to help a disciple of Christ? I believe there are many men who seem externally bad, but who are internally good. I believe that in many men whom we call bad, there is an intrinsic nature which, if it could be touched by the fire of heavenly love, would consume all this outwardness which stands in the way of their higher development, so that they would come out into the blessedness of a Christian life.

Are there not some in this congregation who are wearing the steel armor of the world, but who carry inside a great heart, a tender conscience, a real contempt for shams, and intense longings for righteousness? Are there not men before me who wish they were Christians, and who long for the kingdom of God, although they know that they are in the kingdom of Satan?

To such I speak to-day. You believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Carry your belief into action. Profess his name. Range yourselves with his followers.

Finally, I think there are many persons who, for want of openness and publicity, for want of declaration, for want of freedom and active exercise in a Christian life, are losing not only the best developments of Christian feeling in themselves, but their best opportunities to pay honor to Him whose name is above every name.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." It is very pleasant, when a man has done well, to have some one whom he honors tell him so; and yet there is something which is sweeter than that. When you have been beholden to a man; when a man has written things that it has done you good to read; when you are consciously lifted into a life of greater purity and manliness and usefulness by some teacher or friend, to be able to express your obligation to your benefactor is, I think, one of the most grateful of all experiences.

I never see Dr. Lieber of New York that I do not want to go and take him by the hand, and say, "I thank you." I read his books when I was a boy, and they laid the foundation for half that I know in respect to political economy—though unfortunately that is not much. I never see him that I do not have a grateful sense of what I owe him. I would go to Europe to express my thanks to some men. I would go, a pilgrim, to Europe, if I might help some men who are in the rigor of poverty, but who deserve better things in the world than others who are rolling in wealth.

And how should we feel toward the Lord Jesus Christ who has created summer about us? *Jesus*, the name above every name, has cheered us, inspired our hope, and been our guide through this stormy life; and how ought we to feel in respect to him? Is it right to receive everything from Christ, and then to hide your honor and your praise of him? Is it right to have every part of your life blessed by the love of Christ, and never say one word of that love to men? Fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, is it right for you to feel that there is a golden cord of hope that runs from your heart up to the throne of God, and yet be unwilling to be known as the lovers and the trusters of the blessed Saviour?

I beseech of you, if there be those who love Christ, who believe in him, do not linger any longer. Rise up, overleap the barriers, come forth, and say, "I am the Lord's, and he is mine." Be glad that men look upon you and say, "He is a Christian"; and then live so that men shall honor Him whose life in you is being developed day by day.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON

We are glad to be brought home again. We are glad for this day of rest that separates between cares and troubles, and gives us hours of sweet release in which we can look upward and look backward and look forward and behold thy providence, and thine own self, and ourselves, in the light of the better world. We thank thee for all the hope that we have of immortality. We thank thee that the care of life, and its rudest experiences, are softened by the thought of that life which is to come. If we triumph here, how glorious shall be our rest there! If now we are pressed by the battle, and seem approaching to defeat, we know that they that are for us are more and mightier than they that are against us, and that by faith we shall overcome even the last enemy, Death. Yea; when in the hour that heart and flesh shall fail, we are despoiled, and carried away captive, and hidden from the sight of men, and corruption seems to have triumphed—then, in the hour of earthly defeat, we still shall be conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. In that hope of the future lies the joy of our present. All that is sweet and pleasant in life, and belongs to it, and in no wise takes hold of thee and of the life to come, is perishable. All earthly fountains which give us drink leave thirst with each drinking; and all earthly food only prepares the way for another and a higher kind of food. From thine hand comes the water of life that quenches thirst; and from thee comes that bread which satisfies hunger forevermore. And in the hope of that glorious life, and its banquet; in the hope of that blessed meeting where all infirmity is gone, and all possibility of evil is ended, and all are united again that are separated on earth, and all inequalities are rounded up into a glorious perfectness of divine nature—in the hope of the life to come, how easy it is to bear the drudgeries of this life, and all its chafes, and its fevers, and its cares, and its burdens! It is thou that by these hopes dost quicken us, to endure our present ill, in the certainty that out of it shall come blessings innumerable—joys from tears; and songs from sighs; and victory from defeat; and rest from labor; and everlasting life from death itself. To thee, O Lord Jesus! we owe these precious promises and hopes. And to thee, this morning, we give ascriptions of praise. Every knee doth bow, and every tongue doth confess that thou art Lord to the glory of God the Father.

And now we beseech of thee that thou wilt work in every heart, this morning. According to thine own sovereign pleasure, out of thy goodness and mercy, and according to thy wisdom and thine insight, do for us that which we need. We pray for strength, and we pray for all those graces of the Spirit by which we are to live. And we pray that we may have ministered to us, to-day, such views of truth as shall quicken us in the duties of life.

And draw near to those that need thee this morning. By the exercise of thy providence thou art training thy people, and art not explaining the reason of what thou art doing. Thou art saying to them, "Ye know not now what I do, but ye shall know hereafter." We would remit to the disclosure of the hereafter the mystery of the present life, rather than spend our time in seeking to find out God, who cannot be found out to perfection.

We pray, O God, that thou wilt draw near to those on whom thou hast laid thy hand. Let them feel that it is God, and that his touch is full of kindness and of mercy even when it brings pain.

Be near to those that are in great sorrows and afflictions, and comfort them. Be near to any that feel themselves left alone. Be near to those whose burdens seem greater than they can bear, and whose hearts from day to day are full of poignant suffering. Lord, we pray that thou wilt guide

them, and that thou wilt give them so grateful a sense of thy presence, and of thy sure providence in them and upon them, that they may rest. Oh! may there be many hearts that to-day shall do as children do who flee from the face of those that hurt them, and with wild outcry of alarm rush to their parents, and hide themselves in their bosom, and forget their troubles and fears and tears. Open thine arms for the oppressed ones. Let thy heart be a refuge for thy people to-day; and out of cares, out of fear, out of anguish, out of bereavements, and out of the oppressions of this world, may they be able to flee and find rest in the arms and in the bosom of their God.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt awaken in hearts so rescued and released a more gracious faith in thee; a more abiding confidence in thy presence, and in thine helpfulness. Grant, we pray thee, that it may be easier, from the things which they have suffered, and from the things which they have experienced in release from suffering, to trust God in days to come. How often shall we tread the same road, fearing, and rescued, only to fear again! When, at last, shall we run to cast our care on thee, and not take it back again? When shall we know the peace that passeth all understanding, which God gives, and which the world cannot take away? Bring into this secret experience of thine own life the lives of thy dear people to-day. And bless to them the memories of the past. Sanctify to them the manifold experiences of their lives. And may they be able to-day, in the fullness of their trust in God, to look upon all that is dearest to them, and say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

Grant, we pray thee, that all who have come this morning with hearts full of love and gratitude for unexpected favors, for gracious deliverances, for mercies in [illegible] measure, of which they are tenderly conscious, may have access to thee, that they may pour out their thanksgiving and praise, and that they may feel that God is in them and over them, and that he rejoices [illegible] joy of his people,

[illegible]nd we pray for any that are to-day strangers among us. We beseech of thee that by the Holy Ghost their hearts may grow into such communion with God and his people that they shall have found here a home for the soul. May the house of God be to them a very place of rest.

We pray that thou wilt go with the thoughts of those who wander after their beloved; who are separated from those that are dearest to them on earth. Some search for their beloved upon the seas. Grant that a blessing may come upon all those that are on the great waters. Some search for their loved ones afar off in other lands. Grant that thy blessing may be swifter than their thoughts. Some seek for their own in distant parts of our own land. And some mourn when they think of those who are separated from them in evil ways, and with wicked companions. And we pray that thy mercies may go forth in answer to their supplication to-day. Oh, that the cries of parents for their children might be heard; and that the tears and prayers of children for their parents might bring them together in blessed union in Christ Jesus! Oh, that those who are separated from each other might see eye to eye again, and hands clasp hands in inseparable friendships! Oh, that those who are burdened, and who are walking in a trying way, might to-day put shoulder to shoulder, and heart to heart, and stand in the fullness of the blessings of the Lord Jesus Christ!

And so we pray that this may be a house of deliverance; a house of blessing; a house of joy, to-day. And be thou in the midst of thy people, to make this day a jubilee to them. And we pray that those who are standing apart, and looking on wistfully, and marveling what these experiences mean, may hear the voice of God calling to them. Are they not also children of the Lord? Are not they, too, to be sanctified by the precious blood of Jesus Christ? Oh, that all to-day might realize their portion in Christ;

that all might rise up and go home. Though they be sinful; though they are not able yet to break off from their sins by their own strength, may they cry out to thee. As suppliants by the wayside, desiring to be healed of their blindness, called, and called again to thee, and would not be stopped by those that rebuked them, so may thy afflicted ones cry out unto thee. And so do thou stand and command them to come. And wilt thou touch their eyes that they may see. And seeing, may they behold thee.

We pray for all those who are in our midst laboring for the young, and for the wandering, and for the neglected. We pray for all classes and conditions of men. May they work with more love and more patience and more and more wisdom, and with the fullness of the blessing of the Spirit of God.

We pray for all our land. We pray for all the churches that are established therein. We pray for all schools and academies and colleges. We pray that they may send forth a light that shall drive away darkness and superstition. We pray for the neglected, for the ignorant, for those that are struggling toward newly created manhood. May they be found, and helped, and raised to the estate and the blessedness of Christian manhood.

Look upon the nations of the earth. Behold their sufferings. Behold how men rise up against men, and nation against nation, and are dashed together as the waves of the sea. When shall the storms of human passion cease? Oh, when shall come those days of promised deliverance, those days of justice and of truth and of love, which have been so long predicted in thy word, but which hang like the stars afar off, shining, but giving no warmth. Lord Jesus, bless the nations. Pity them, and let blood cease to flow. Draw back thine hand in which the cup of mixture is. Oh! let the day of thy wrath cease. Put up thy sword, most merciful One, and ride forth in peace upon all the earth. And let the kingdoms of this world become, at last, the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt make us more courageous of things that are right, and more fearful of things that are wrong. Help us to live more for the things invisible, and less for the noisy world that obtrudes itself every day upon our senses. Help us to be faithful in this world. And since we are in the body, and upon this solid earth, and must know the experiences that belong to human nature, which thou thyself didst meet, grant that we may be faithful in all our duties one toward another; in all our duties toward the State; in all our duties toward our business and toward things that shall perish in the using. Oh! suffer us not to be led into captivity by this outward life. May there be powers within and upon every one that shall hold him in restraint. May there be a divine influence that shall keep bright our hope, our faith, our love, and our aspirations. May we live inwardly for God and for Christ. And so may we live that, at last, when the body shall unclasp, that when at last those things which bind us and confine us shall fall away, we may blossom, and all heaven rejoice in the fragrance of that love which Christ hath brought to the soul. And to thy name shall be the praise forever and forever. *Amen.*

TRUTHFULNESS.

"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."—Col. III., 9, 10.

You will observe that the apostle speaks of falsehood, or lying, as a trait belonging to "the old man," or animal nature; and that in the new character, the true manhood, which it was the purpose of Christ to produce in the world, it is not to be found.

I propose to speak familiarly to you, to-night, on the subject of *Lies and Falsehoods.*

There are a thousand casuistical questions which have come up for discussion, as to what is true and what is false, and as to what one should do in this and that direction, or in such and such exigences —questions that are not without interest, and that it would be profitable to discuss; but I propose, to-night, not to speak upon them, but to speak upon the whole subject of the effect of falseness or untruth on a man's character.

The origin of falsehood, I suppose, in the first instance, is weakness. I apprehend that there is not a case in which, at first there is a natural love of untruth. I believe that all mankind prefer truth. I believe that even those who do not employ it prefer it. I believe that there is an element of truth-loving among even bad men. That people like lies is no evidence that they do not like the truth; because it is quite possible for one person to like moral opposites—that is, to approve them; to be pleased with the exhibition of them. In the animal kingdom we find that to weakness is joined, for self-protection, a power of concealment; a certain slyness, or cunning. Many persons are able to preserve life in the presence of superior strength only by the exertion of some false appearance.

When we rise out of the animal kingdom into the lower forms of human life, among savages, we still find this trait. We find that men habitually seek to defend themselves from aggression by the use of concealment and falsehoods. By false representations they undertake to gain advantages which they are not able to compass

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by the direct exertion of their faculties in a normal way. This is particularly the case where, among savage people, oppression reigns. Men attempt to conceal their property by falsifying. Where the hand of rapine and violence threaten to destroy men and their households, they think it perfectly proper to set their pursuer upon a wrong scent by an untruth, in order to save themselves and those that are dear to them. This they inherit from their animal origin, or, rather, it is that part of them which is animal. It is, as it were, a part brought along and introduced into the lower forms of human life from the animal economy.

I shall not undertake to discuss the ethics of falsehood. I merely say that while its purpose, oftentimes, is humane, and while there are many cases arising under circumstances which it would be difficult to argue, it is a trait which is developed only in the lower forms and the lower conditions of life. That manhood is very low which attempts to compass its beneficent ends by the use of lies.

We hear much reproach heaped upon the slaves, or those that recently were slaves, on account of their dishonesty, and their addiction to falsehood; but how could you expect anything else? Can you disrobe a man of all the attributes of manhood, and he stand and smile, and take it contentedly? Can you strip a man of every right of property, and every right of citizenship, and he not attempt in the slightest degree to make compensation to himself? Can you violate in a man, organically, every single moral right of action, and he be a saint all the time in your presence, and never make use of the lower attributes of his nature in reprisal? Why, the system of doing wrong is such that it tends to dishonesty. It touches the very motive, the very spring of the lower elements of human nature. Men, by their animal instincts attempt to compensate for that which power wrests from them. And although there may be single slaves under the influence of Christian truth, who will be faithful, honest, and true, yet it is utterly impossible to have a multitude of men that are oppressed yet remain truth-speaking and honest. It is not in the nature of things. And I do not marvel that there is so much falsifying; I only marvel that there is so little of it.

When you look at childhood, you see that right over again which we perceive among nations. Children are but the beginnings again of the human race. And in children deceit is not a natural trait. Although some have, constitutionally, a tendency to use that instrument more than others, yet, in the main, it is an instrument of weakness and fear. And to a large extent children copy it from the example of those who are above them. The parents have learned

to employ falsehood skillfully and dexterously; but the children, not having learned so to use it, go about it awkwardly, bunglingly; and the parents whip their children, not for violating truth and conscience, but for doing the same things that they do with less skill than they do them. Children attempt to cover up their wrong-doing because they have not the courage to face the punishment to which an exposure of it would subject them. Their sense of justice is acute; and yet they seek to shield themselves from justice by evading the truth. They run into falsehood, not because they love it, but because they are not strong enough to bear the reproof to which misconduct or mishaps will bring them, if they are found out. They are not yet enough developed to understand what is right or wrong, or what is best for them in the larger circuits of life. They want many things, they have great desires, and they are unable to realize their wishes by right means; and then they attempt to compass by craft and indirection and falsehood that which they cannot obtain legitimately. And why should they not? They see, or might see, all society doing the same thing. They merely do in the small what men do in the large.

In these cases the origin of falsehood is weakness. It is the attempt to make up by the use of the lower animal instincts what should be attained, if possessed at all, by the reason and the moral sentiments. It is a bad compensation for supposed deficiencies or for supposed disqualifying circumstances.

At length men organize this trait of falsehood which they have learned to employ incidentally, as an instrument by which to supplement weakness, or as a kind of indirect self-defense. Education at length develops it into a more positive form. And then men employ it, deliberately and actively and regularly, to seek things that are evil, or else to seek right things which they have not the strength, or, more likely, the patience, to gain by legitimate means.

I believe that all the great ends of life are better gained by the use of the reasoning faculties than in any other way. These faculties are larger, and they require more room to turn around in; they are more far-reaching, and they require more time in which to bring forth their fruit; and men have not patience to wait for them. All the great ends of life, whether individual or collective, are better sought, and more surely compassed, and longer held, and more really enjoyed, by the use of a clear, truthful reason, by the open and direct exertion of our better feelings, than in any other manner. But people cannot wait; or they are not instructed to believe this. And so, men in business, in professions, in all the pursuits of life, are

constantly endeavoring to achieve great ends in this world by the use of specious appearances, by indirection, by cunning, by fraud, by falsehood.

Now, it is not a question of mere right and wrong that I wish to argue to-night; it is not a question of whether this falsifying is a sin against God or not. We all know that it is. I propose to discuss the question of the results which it works upon character. What sort of men does lying make? What is the effect of it upon a man's moral constitution, and upon his manhood? And, on the other hand, what is the effect of holding one's self responsible for the truth, all the time, and always? What influence has it in producing a manly character?

If a man takes powder in his hand, and touches it off, there is the question whether he has a right to do it, or whether it is wrong for him to do it. And then there is another question—namely, What, without any moral consideration, will that powder do to the man's skin, and to his muscles? It will burn them. It will shrink them. It will incapacitate them, and so will cripple his hand. It is this constitutional result that I wish to look into to-night. Not the question, which, before God goes with our general accountability, but this larger question: What does insincerity, or falseness do to the man who uses it? What do truth, frankness, candor, simplicity, directness, do to a man? What is the effect on character, respectively, of the one element or the other? These elements are character-making. Truth and falsehood are like food in digestion. Good food makes good blood, good muscle, good bone, good bodily strength. Bad food, on the other hand, vitiates the secretions, and makes all parts of the animal economy weak. I hold that truth is the bread of a noble manhood; that lies are the bad food that carries disease with it everywhere through the whole economy; and that no man who is building character in this world can afford to build with any other material than that of truthfulness, cost what it may. It is not a question, either, as to whether you can stand it; whether you can endure the test; whether it is beyond your exertion. My declaration is not, that you cannot have *Christian* manhood on any other basis than that of transparent truthfulness, and that if you take a course of falseness, whether it be little or much, you cannot help reaping as you sow. What I assert is, that falsehood vitiates *manly character.*

In the first place, the habit of falseness tends to strengthen "the old man," as our text has it; to incline men to use and to rely upon their lowest powers—their animal forces. It is weakness in moral and intellectual directions, and strength in animal directions, as I

have already said, from which the habit of untruth springs; and the use of it is cultivating that side of man which needs the least cultivation ; which comes itself to ripeness; which begins early and is strong. It is not "the old man" which we need to develop. It is "the new man" created in righteousness in Christ Jesus that needs education and development. The habit of using falseness is an abandonment of the larger and nobler instincts of our nature. We will not employ the best instruments which we have to accomplish the ends of life. The instruments which we do employ for that purpose are the very worst elements of our being.

This habit tends, next, to dim, and to destroy, finally, the very sense and instinct of truth. Men at first deceive, knowing it; but by the constant use of deception they cease to even know that they are doing it. Gradually it blinds the moral sense. And it is in this direction that great lies are less harmful than little ones. Men think that a great black lie is very culpable. I suppose it is. But when an armorer wishes, by scouring, to cut the very surface of metal down, what does he do? Take a bar of iron and rub it? No; he takes emery. Its particles are as small as a pin's point; and these he puts on; and by scouring he cuts down the surface—takes off the enamel. You think that a great lie is a great sin, and a great shame to a man; but after all, these little lies are more dangerous, because there are so many of them; and because each one of them is diamond-pointed. And these little petty untruths which are so small that you do not notice them, and so numerous that you cannot estimate them, are the ones that take off the very enamel of the moral sense—cut away its surface. And men become so accustomed to it, that they do not recognize that they are putting things in false lights, when, by word, by deed, by indirections, by exaggerations, by shifting the emphasis, by various dynamical means, they present things, not as they see them, but as they want to see them. This phantasmagoric process by which men are throwing false lights upon action and motive; upon what is happening and going to happen; the ten thousand little modes by which men are seeking to pervert things, and make them seem different from what they really are; the petty falsenesses to which men resort in order that they may realize their vain ambitions in life—these are pernicious and demoralizing in the extreme. And the habit of employing them wears the character more than a great rousing lie told six times a year would do. Yet there are men who, if they were convicted of falsehood in a great transaction, would lose their character forever. Their neighbors would say of them, "We can not trust such men as they are." And those very persons who say they would not trust them, do not hesi-

tate to indulge themselves in five million petty falsehoods, little midges of lies, in the course of the year. A lion is to be dreaded, to be sure; but deliver me from those blood-sucking insects which make me smart and suffer! A single mosquito is not much; but a multitude of them, myriads of them, amount to a great deal. And it is this falseness in little things that tends to dim, to obscure, to almost obliterate, a sense of truth. There are men who have almost entirely lost their sense of proportion, their appreciation of magnitude, and their understanding of the connection between cause and effect. They look at everything in the light of what they want, so much that they think that is true which they desire to have true.

So that not only does the use of falsehood strengthen and cultivate the lower nature, but it tends, from the beginning, and all through life, to obscure and obliterate the moral sense, which is one of the great characteristic elements of manhood, as distinguished from animalhood.

There are three points in which we are different from animals. No animal has imagination: man has. No animal has a sense of right and wrong: man has. No animal laughs, or has the sense of humor: man does and has. But moral sense marks the difference between man and the animal more than anything else. This is that which, being destroyed, takes the foundation out from under manhood.

Then the habit of using falseness lowers the standard of honor, and of those sensibilities that make character noble and large. In all literatures—in modern literature certainly—honor, manliness, is very much esteemed. I know that in early days falsehoods for a patriotic purpose, falsehoods in war, where warriors deceived each other for the sake of victory, were rather praised. I know that there are some nations of Europe in which falsehood has been very much admired. In one of Macaulay's most original essays, he analyzes Othello, and says that if that play had been written in Italy, the people would have gone off in sympathy, not with Othello, but with the scoundrel Iago. Othello would, in Italy, have been thought to be a great, honest blunderhead, straightforward because he did not know any better than to be straightforward. "But, ah!" Macaulay tells us the Italians would have said, "Iago is a shrewd man, a good manager, a cunning, dexterous rival, a splendid fellow!" He was shrewd, cunning and dexterous; but he was not a model of manhood. The character of the people there had become so vitiated that they had learned to love untruth, and had learned to rank it among manly qualities. But I think this was exceptional; for I do not believe that this can be said of that noble people now. I believe

there has a process of renovation and growth been going on among them, and that the age of falsehood in that country has largely passed away. That was the old Italian character, rather than the present one. The Spanish character, too, has had certain periods of being vitiated by a tendency to falsehood. But in all the Germanic races the sense of truth has been regarded as one of the indispensable elements of true manhood. At no time among them could a man be supposed to be noble where honor did not carry in it a necessity for truth-speaking. The ideal man, according to their standard, was one who would die rather than falsify his word, or speak an untruth. A knight of honor was a man who held his word to be above everything. There is nothing like that; and all the world have admired it.

Now, the habit of using petty falsehoods, minor untruths, little lies of all sorts, in conversation, in business, and in the various ways of life, lowers the standard of honor, or takes honor away from men. That is the reason why there is so little honor in the world. There is very little of it. When men speak about *honor* they mean a kind of worldly conscience. That is not a substitute for moral sense, but it is good as far as it goes, and I wish there was more of it.

This habit also weakens the faith of men in men. One of the great preservatives of society, one of the things which preserves the individual, the household, and communities, and makes them useful, and renders them helpful one to another, is that men have faith in men. But just so soon as it comes to be understood that men indulge in untruth, people instantly flee away from them.

It is very interesting to observe, as a matter of fact, how these things come about. There are many men whose word in business we do not think of believing unless we have collateral evidence, but whose word in the household we believe without hesitation. They pacify their conscience in the family. There they adhere strictly to the truth. They govern themselves by different rules in different places. There are many men who believe it would be most disgraceful as gentlemen not to speak the truth, but who think it is not disgraceful to indulge in falsehood as business men. They say that business has its appointed customs, and they act accordingly. In the strife of business with some men we are obliged to put ourselves on our guard. If they make a statement, we feel it necessary to sift it before we can place any reliance upon it. And it is only when we have gone to one and another and found out that it is correct, that we accept it. On the other hand, there are some men whose statement in business we take as law, without verifying it. There they are scrupulously honest. Their pride lies in the direction of truthfulness in business. There they hold themselves to a high standard of truth-speaking. But out

of business, and among their companions, they are more lax. There they do not hold themselves subject to the same rigid rules. And so we learn to judge them according to their standard.

Now, when, in a community, men are not to be taken at their word; when men's words and deeds are deceptive; when, if a man presents a piece of work, his presenting it is no guarantee that it is good; when the brand does not carry conviction of honesty and of truth—under such circumstances, not only is there mischief done to the persons deceived and the authors of the deception, but there is a tendency to lessen the hold of man on man, and the confidence between man and man, throughout that community. It is a disintegrating tendency; it separates men, and they come to be like grains of sand which, though they may lie in close proximity to each other, are not joined together. Whereas, society requires that men should be united like the links of a chain, which are welded one around another. Faith being lost in men generally, society is wounded fatally, and cannot stand.

Lack of faith is disastrous to the life of a community or a nation. I do not believe that there can be anything like a successful government for the people by the people in a country where persons are accustomed universally to be indifferent to the truth. I do not mean by this that a republican government cannot stand in a nation where people tell lies. Such a government has stood many years in just such a nation. But in a nation where the people are so morally deteriorated that truth is generally disregarded, I do not believe that self-government can be maintained.

I have great faith that wherever the Germanic races are, there will be a great training of men to love and to speak the truth. But not so with the Romanic races. France cannot be republic. Why? Because the very feeling of truth down at the bottom of its people is wanting. There are a thousand excellent traits in the French people, both of stock and of education; but they have not the element of simple manly truth. Let a man go among the peasantry of France, and he sees a thousand things which make him admire them much more than he can admire the rude and rugged German, or the boorish, lower-class Englishman; but there is among the Germans and the Englishmen a kind of robust honor about truth which you do not find in France. You will not find it in Spain. The people there are lousy with lying! In Italy, in Spain, and in France, republican governments will wait long. They will be held up by adventitious influences until they can be educated into truth, into faith of each other, and into reliableness, or else they will go down. What is necessary to their maintenance is

that the people shall be taught to speak the truth. If you ask me what is necessary to a permanent government in France, I reply, Education of the people in honesty.

Why has the English government maintained itself with so loose a system of laws, without a written constitution, and apparently with the elements of perpetual change in it? Because, with all her faults (and being her descendants we know that she has many of them), there is a certain reliableness in the English character. There is a truth-element in it. They love truth. And why are the Germanic races, which have been separated one from another, coming more and more to be one? Why, when they have been ground by dissensions and conflicts almost to dust, have they been able to recuperate, and lay stronger foundations, until they have come to a majesty of power? It is because there was an inherent truth-element among them. Not that they, too, have not many faults; but, after all, they are relatively higher in the moral scale than any of the surrounding nations.

Where there is a sense of honesty and of truth you find qualities on which you can build self-government; but without a sense of truth and honesty you cannot build any government except that which comes from the iron rod of power. Wherever men make up their minds to lie and cheat, they are food for tyrants; and if they want to be self-governing they must have that manhood which carries truth and honesty for its basis. The habit of looseness and carelessness and untruth imposes burdens on society that no nation can well bear. I suppose that if you were to see an old warrior again in our times, cumbered with his vast defensive armor—his breast-plate, his greaves, his back-piece, his ponderous shield, his solid spear, his weighty sword—you would laugh him to scorn, and say, "Why, he spends more than half his strength in carrying his armor!" That is just the condition in which society is walking today. The cunning, the lies, the cheatings, the dishonesties in business and society, are such that every store has to be built with thicker walls, stronger locks, and bolts, and bars, and chains, than would otherwise be necessary; and there is need of more watchmen and policemen; and all the apparatus of government is doubled and trebled and quadrupled. A multitude of extra appliances are required to fight against the simple tendency to dishonesty and untruth. Teach men to speak the truth and to deal honestly with each other, and society may dispossess itself of more than half the weights and burdens that are sinking it like a water-logged ship. Men that are set to watch other men; shackles; balances; the

elaborateness of business; the minute arrangements that have everywhere to be made, and that imply depravity, if not actual dishonesty —these are the things, after all, which make business heavy. Business would be comparatively easy and light if it were divested of these hindrances. Men in society go mailed, and all parts of business are made cumbrous, like vast wagons on rough roads, half as heavy as the loads which they carry, because men are not honest.

How simple it would be if a man's word were as good as his bond; if we never had to weigh it, and sift it, and see one man, and another man, and another, and inquire about it, and find out by the hardest whether it was true or not! If men's statements could be relied upon, and men could trust each other, what an impetus would be given to the world's progress! We talk of the immense progress which the world is making by railroads skillfully constructed, by ships navigated by steam-power, and by lightning, which, being harnessed, carries knowledge throughout all the earth. Undoubtedly these things are doing very much toward carrying the race up in civilization; but if you could invent a process by which the human race could be made truthful and honest, it would make the world move ten thousand times faster than it now does under the influence of these forces. The great want of society to-day, is the habit of adhering to absolute truth and reliable honesty. Those are the qualities which we need above all others. It is in them that society and the individual are weakest.

If these general views are correct, no other battle is harder for a young man and a young woman who are beginning in life, and who mean to build a truly noble character, than that which they will be called upon to wage against falsehood. One of the first, one of the most constant, and one of the most difficult things that they will have to do, is to maintain transparent simplicity and truthfulness. I do not say that it is very difficult to avoid glaring, malicious falsehoods; I do not say that it is very difficult to abstain from using falsehood as an instrument by which to accomplish your ends; but I do say that to pass through the customs of society, its *complaisance*, its flatteries, its white lies, and its thousand little permissions, and come out unscathed, is not easy. I do say that to pass through business in the way in which it is conducted, and keep your garments white, and maintain a pure character, requires the utmost endeavor. There must be an education in this regard. No matter how patriotic a man is who becomes a soldier, he is awkward at first; and if he would perform his duty gracefully and well, he must learn to do it by assiduous drill. And so it is with

men who aspire after a true Christian manhood. For the most part, every neighborhood is but a mere drill-ground. And I advertise you that when a man sets out to build his character on a higher pattern than the animal man—according to that higher and nobler model, the new man in Christ Jesus—one of the most difficult things that he will meet with will be the duty of being truthful and honest in all that he says and does. There are very few men who have the moral courage to speak the truth right straight along; there are very few men who are able to adhere to the truth in act, and word, and thought, and feeling.

We talk about great moral attainments. One of the greatest moral attainments that one could make would be to become uniform in transparent truthfulness and real guilelessness of soul. Therefore we know what is meant when it is declared that if a man bridle his own tongue he is a perfect man. That is to say, after a man has arrived at that degree of self-control that he can bridle his tongue, not making it an instrument of falsehood, but an instrument of truth, there will be nothing else that will not be easy to him.

This element of truth, absolute, uniform, habitual, characteristic, will also introduce an element of reconstruction into the character in other directions. In other words, speaking the truth is not simply that you avoid falsifying. If you made up your mind that you would always speak the truth, you would find, sooner or later, that there were other things besides mere truth-speaking involved in that determination. There are a thousand things which a man permits himself to think and feel and do, of which he says, "I can cover them up;" but the moment a man feels, "I am bound to tell the truth at all hazards, and to be transparent as crystal," that moment he says, "I cannot afford to be otherwise than right and true and noble." In addition to the element of truth, it introduces a higher standard of character and virtue, that before one has scarcely thought of cultivating. States of mind which, though admirable, men are liable to think of as moral accomplishments rather than indispensable duties, come to be estimated at their true value. There is introduced the element of reconstruction, and power and beauty are developed throughout the whole character.

The Quakers (not alone, but significantly) have made simplicity and truth-speaking a point in their economy. In any large body of men, some will come near to the standard which is set up, and some will fall away from it; and undoubtedly it is the case with this persuasion that many fall far below their prescribed rules of conduct and life; but my impression is that as a body of men there prevails among them, on an average, more truth-speaking than is to be found

among other religious bodies. They have made a point of that. And look at the result. What quietness is there among them! What reliableness! What manliness! What an element of nobleness! What depth of character! How many of their cares in life are alleviated! How many of the ruggednesses and bolts and jolts are removed from their path! I think this habit, as they have practiced it, has yielded such fruit as to encourage men to make truth-speaking a prime element in their character.

A man that is a Christian is not necessarily a man that is rapturous in devotion. He may be that, he ought to be, and it is unfortunate if he is not; but rapture is not the characteristic feature of Christianity. A man that prays well, and sings well, and goes booming up like a rocket every once in a while—that is not what we mean by a Christian. We mean a man who is a new creature in Christ Jesus. We mean a man who has constructed his character out of moral elements, and not out of animal. That man in whom simplicity and truth and honesty are found, is like the New Jerusalem, built of precious stones through every single layer of his character.

I have already spoken of business, and of the organic deceits that are wrought into it. I feel more and more that the necessity for truth-speaking in individual men must address itself sooner or later to the world. Look at the deceits which are practiced in business life. I do not mean by this a vague and general aspersion on all men that are engaged in business—for there are men in business who are honest; but if you take any single department of business, and observe how it is carried on, you will see that the temptations of society tend to introduce into it the element of falseness. Things are not as they seem. The carpet is not what it looks to be. It is not what it was designed that people should think it was. The colors are bright, and the surface is good, that people may believe that the article itself is good; but it comes far short of being as good as it has the appearance of being. And the effect of such deception is to lower the quality of textile fabrics. All articles wrought in wood and leather and metal are deteriorated in quality from the same cause. The same is true of houses, and the furniture which is put into them. And adulterations may be traced to the same source. Every particle of food that a man buys, almost, is adulterated. So is the medicine that he takes. The food sickens us; and then the medicine lies to us, and cheats the blood. There is an element of fraud that goes through whatever is offered for sale in the market. The anvil has learned to lie; the loom has learned to lie; silk has learned to lie; cotton has learned to lie; flax has

learned to lie; hemp has learned to lie. Every element in society pretends to be one thing, and on the surface seems to be that thing, while at the bottom it is another thing.

"Well," you say, "it is universally understood." No, it is not. If it was there would not be so much profit in it. It is the attempt of the more shrewd to take advantage of the less shrewd. It is the attempt of the strong to oppress the weak. It is the old robber baron in his castle descending, after men have planted their crops, and stealing them. It is the pirate on the sea pouncing upon the merchantman that is laden with treasures from abroad, and taking possession of them. It is the grasping king that appropriates the earnings of his subjects. Organic dishonesty, structural lies in goods, are modes of robbing the poor—for there is where the evil comes at last. The tendency of wrong things is to work out at the bottom. The dregs of dishonesty naturally settle down. And the poor are fleeced by those who are cunninger than they. The weak are oppressed by the strong. Those that are lower in life are robbed by those that are higher. And there must in this direction be a reformation. There must be a public conscience.

I do not undertake to say that men have not a right to make different grades of goods. I do not undertake to say that coffee shall be all coffee and not part chiccory. I do not undertake to say that chiccory shall be all chiccory, and not part burned biscuits that have been sent four times across the sea. I do not undertake to say that there shall not be adulterations in commerce. But if a thing passes for a first-class article, it ought to be first-class; if it passes for second-class, it ought to be second-class; and if it passes for third-class it ought to be third-class. It is proper enough that there should be various qualities of things; but everything ought to be what it seems, and ought to seem what it is.

Honesty in the man, and honesty in the work—that is what must be secured in society, or society will never be Christianized. You may send the Gospel to the heathen. A man that gives time and thought and means for that which is below the horizon where he never sees, is actuated by a true benevolence, and manifests a real faith. A church or a community that works for what it does not see, is a nobler and broader church or community than one that only works for the things which appeal to the senses. I believe in sending the Gospel abroad; but I have little faith in the efficacy of a Gospel that is only superficially extended. The Gospel, to be of much service in regenerating the world, must be so administered that it shall come out in business, in all forms of industry, everywhere in life.

No man need ever expect the millennium, the perfect day, to come, until truth, in the man, and in all that comes forth from the man, is characteristic of the race.

This is a matter which I feel ought to be much more insisted upon by the pulpit. I feel it more because I have my ministry largely among those who are beginning life. On Sunday nights especially, there come hither many such. But not too many. I thank God for the privilege of speaking to so many that are young. And I feel that I cannot do my duty to them unless I insist more upon these fundamental qualities. What are called "minor" morals are *foundation* morals. "Truth in the inward parts" is requisite to all true Christianity. If you think that you are Christians while your life is honey-combed by little deceptions and falsehoods and dishonesties, then your spiritual experiences are a delusion and a snare. There is no virtue nor safety in substitutes or plasters that cover up and hide from you the essential qualities of your character. When you have truth at the bottom of your nature, and it permeates your whole life, then your conscience mounts up, and your hope and faith flame forth, and you have the basis for the highest experiences. Then you have that which is worth having, and for which you may bless God. But nothing can take the place of truth-speaking and honesty. If you rely upon anything else in their stead, it will mislead you and destroy you. And while the pulpit ought not less, perhaps, to preach doctrine, it ought to raise its voice more in respect to the old-fashioned, much-needed virtues of honesty, truth, honor, industry and fidelity. These are what we need. Men need more rights, without any doubt, and they will get them when they perform more duties. What men want just now is duties, *duties*, DUTIES!

This is a work, I remark finally, that most especially appeals to households and to mothers. For mothers are God's chief educators in this world. It seems to me that we must go back again to the old-fashioned times. We have advantages in the household now, that were not enjoyed then, in many ways; but it seems to me that in the old-fashioned times there was more faithful instruction that passed from the mother's heart to the child's ear than there is at present. We are too apt to shift our duties, in this respect, upon the Sabbath-school. Many responsibilites are thrown upon persons and organizations outside of the family which ought to rest upon the shoulders of parents. Parents should remember that it is their duty now, as it ever has been, to educate their children, not only in regard to secular things, but in regard to things moral and spiritual, as well. And the duty will never be removed from parents of in-

stilling into the minds of their children the ideas of that which is right and pure and true, and of arming them to go out into that life whose course is largely a conflict of dishonesty and truth-speaking. I do not say that the habit of being truthful and honest is piety; but I venture to say that any young man or young woman who is educated at home so thoroughly that the habit of honesty and truth-speaking are formed there, will, when he or she goes out into life, stand nearer the kingdom of God than those persons who have not been thus educated. Truth is a foundation on which the divine Spirit is more apt to work than any other. This is the need of the household, the need of the community, and the need of our times—that manliness which is indicative of the new man in Christ Jesus, out of which is cast all illusion of the outside, and whatever is borrowed from the animal; and into which is gathered all that is pure and true and lovely and of good report.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We do not draw near to thee, our Father, as if thou wert ignorant of our want. We are drawn by that of thee which is in us. Thou knowest what things we have need of before we ask. Neither art thou one that is reluctant to give, and that needs persuasion. Thou dost exceeding abundantly more than we ask or think. The riches of thy grace transcend our thought. We draw near to thee because thou hast made it pleasant for children to speak to their parents. We have learned that the things which we receive are a double blessing if we ask them of those who love us. Not only have they a value of their own, but they come perfumed with the thoughts of those who give them. Thou hast joined thyself to thy gifts, and in taking them we take thee. And how much more art thou than bread, or raiment! How much more glorious art thou han the sun, or than all things which the sun brings forth—its children of beauty! All things are made nobler and better when the light of thy countenance falls upon them, and when we take them as from the outstretched hand of Love!

How blessed is the thought that thou thinkest of us not only when we think of thee, but always! We rest in the consciousness that no harm can befall us if thou art with us and thinking of us. If God be for us, who can be against us?

We pray that thou wilt lift us up into the region of these thoughts—where they abide and dwell; and there may we have rest and peace with God—that peace which passeth all understanding.

And we beseech of thee that we may not be disturbed, and that the currents of desire which have agitated us may cease to have domination. May we have a trustful and restful feeling in thy providence. May we believe that we are more to thee than we can be one to another. May we realize that there is no mother nor father that can love their children as God loves us. Thy life given for us, and thy suffering borne for us, are pledges of thy faithfulness in loving; and why should we bear burdens since there is infinite, everlasting strength to bear them for us? Why should we be weighed

down with care when we are commanded to cast all our care upon God. Oh! help us to bear our burdens and cares. May we have joy, rather than sadness. May we have songs in the night. May we be cheered in darkness. May we be comforted in affliction. May we be strengthened in weakness. May we ever more feel the hand of God around about us; so that when our own strength and wisdom fail we may lean evermore upon thee. We commit ourselves to thy guidance. We say, Thy will be done. Though it cost much suffering, nevertheless it is better. And we desire, O God, that thou shouldst mark our path by thy judgment, and not by ours; by thy infinite wisdom, and not by our mutable longings. We pray that thou wilt do that which is best for us for time and for eternity.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to-night to every one in thy presence as he severally needs. Thou knowest the way; thou knowest the secret life; thou knowest where the pain-giving thorn resides; thou knowest who bear heavy and grievous burdens. There is perfect freedom with thee. Naked and open are we before Him with whom we have to do.

Grant, to-night, that every one in thy presence may have release for the hour. Before thee may they stand disembarrassed. Before thee may all stand rejoicing. Meet every want. Whisper consolation and acceptance to every heart.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless those who are gathered together; all that are in the midst of life; all that are experiencing its trials, its temptations, its duties, its various imperfections. Strengthen thou them, that they may be able to live in the fear of God, and in the love of men. Raise up in our midst a generation to serve thee with more valor, and with more power, and with more success than have been given to us.

We thank thee for all the mercies which thou hast granted to our several households. We thank thee for so much consolation as we have had in affliction. We thank thee that thou hast mixed chastisements with so much that is sweet and comforting.

We commend the rising generation to thee. Be near to the young. Grant that they may grow up, from the beginning, to a life of rectitude. Be with those who are just embarking upon life. May they not mistake the true path. There are ways which seem right unto men, the ends whereof are death. Grant that every one may discern the right way, unseduced, and unterrified.

May every one in thy presence be able to walk in comeliness; in fidelity; in honesty; in truth; in hope and love of God; and in the faith and expectation of immortality through Jesus Christ.

And we pray that thou wilt multiply in our midst the offices of kindness, and of forbearance, and of gentleness. We beseech of thee that thou wilt render more and more fruitful those that labor in word and doctrine, and rear up around about them the evidences of their fidelity. We pray for all thy churches, and for all the ministers of the Gospel of Christ, throughout our land, and for all that teach their fellow-men throughout the world. And we pray that thou wilt hasten that appointed day, so long in coming, when all men shall know thee, from the greatest unto the least.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

HEART-CONVICTION.

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness."—Rom. x., 10.

I do not say that the design of the Apostle was to discriminate between the convictions of the feelings and the convictions of the intellect; and yet, this is involved in the declaration. *The heart* stands, in the Bible, for *feeling*—particularly for affections and moral emotions; and the declaration here, which is literally true—*man believeth with the heart*—I shall employ for the purpose of showing that it is not intellectual apprehension, that it is not conviction by the mere force of fact and reasoning, that determines men's faiths and beliefs.

It is a prevalent error that believing is purely an intellectual phenomenon, and that only facts and arguments are required to produce conviction. It is supposed that when facts are clearly stated, and when upon them, or upon other suitable grounds, arguments are honestly and wisely constructed, the understanding ought to yield, like a beleaguered city—that it has been fairly taken when it has been breached with argument and with facts. And yet, nothing is more certain, and nothing is more a subject of remark, that if you adopt the old phrase.

"A man convinced against his will
Is of the same opinion still."

Men hear satisfying arguments all their lives long, and cannot get away from them; and in words they assent to the truth; and yet they do not believe one word of the truth. Nor can they tell why. Sometimes it is said to be because they are perverse and willful. They frequently think that it is not so—that they desire to feel as others feel, and to see as others see. But a conviction of the truth does not come to them from preaching.

Many suppose that the whole duty of a teacher is fulfilled in delivering his messages; that when he has put them into an intellectual form, when his propositions are marshaled and placed in regular and logical sequence, they are the best assailants of men. And yet, it is certainly true that many men are more fruitful as

Sunday Morning, June 18, 1871. Lesson: Col. I., Hymns (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 104, 112, 21.

preachers who have the least reasoning and the least logic in their preaching. It is true that some men, all their lives long, labor with a barren field, whereas, other men with not half their equipage nor half their munitions, and in more unfavorable fields, bring forth abundant fruit of convictions and of conversions.

There seems, therefore, to be something wrong in the theory of conviction—as to what it is, and what produces it. It is generally held that feeling has no proper place in the production of a conviction of the truth, but that it should be excluded; that the mind should be kept colorless and cold as the glass through which the scientist examines phenomena. And there are many who feel that every single appeal to the emotions, whether by illustration or otherwise, is the introduction of just so much of a disturbing force in the sacred process of ratiocination.

Now, in the lowest category of truth—that of material facts and events—it is true that the senses and the perceptive intellect do perceive truth without emotion. In regard to the examination of mere material facts, and the measuring of those facts according to any principle of measurement or classification which may be adopted, it is true that the less emotion there is, and the more pure perception there is, the more likely men will be to come at the truth.

But this is true only in regard to the lowest forms of *facts* of matter. The *relation* of facts of matter to each other develops or discloses a higher kind of truth. The relation of things to things, as of color to color, or of number to number, or of magnitude to magnitude—these are real; but they never can be perceived. They are thought of. They exist in the reflective intellect. They are therefore called truths of an abstract character, or philosophic truths.

In regard to these truths, also, it is certain that the less emotion there is, the more undisturbed will be that process by which, facts having been observed and coördinated, the relations of those facts, or the deductions of them, will be secured.

In the lower category of truth, then—that of facts of matter and their relations to each other—the emotions are a disturbing force in reasoning.

Thus far we have only considered the not unimportant, and yet the least important kinds of truths.

Rising above all other forms of organization, comes man himself; and while he stands upon the material globe, and is composite of material facts, he is also an originating center, organized with immense complexity. He has a force within him that not simply

grows, but thinks, wills, believes, loves, hates, rejoices, sorrows. There are desires, and contests, and beliefs in man, originating in himself, that matter never knows.

See a phenomenon! When the phosphorescent light shines out, is that a phenomenon? And is it not also a phenomenon when a man's mind thinks? When a branch divides, and then divides again, and again divides, joint from joint, and part from part, is that a scientific fact? And is it not also a scientific fact when the mind of a man now thinks, and now wills, and now feels, and in feeling experiences, first one kind of emotion, and then another kind? Are the things that are going on outside of a man, nature? and are not the things which are going on inside of a man just as much nature? If the lily that opens its silver cup on the tranquil lake is a phenomenon in nature, and is to be classified in botany; if the fruit that hangs pendant on the bough is worthy of a place in science, are not these inspirations and emotions, which grow upon a nobler stalk, and have a sweeter blossom, and a richer fruit, also worthy of a place in science? Are they not parts of nature, though they are evanescent, and changing, and repetitious? Are they not just as actually facts? If the lightning flashes out from the East and across the horizon, that is a fact; and if thought flashes out from the mind, is not that a fact just as important? Nay, higher in rank, and greater in importance are those truths which are evolved from man's nature according to the appropriate laws of evolution.

In man truth rises to a higher level than it attains in matter outside of man. It is no longer the mere relation of matter to matter. It becomes moral, affectional, æsthetic. That is, it is the truth of duty, it is the truth of feeling, it is the truth of beauty. Right or wrong, good or bad, true or false, homely or beautiful, lovable or repulsive, refined or vulgar—these are words, not for shadows, but for things. An emotion which takes on a distinct form; an intellectual experience which comes to a real shape—these are *things*, though they wear no body—though they have no continuing form. They are not only things really, but they are *superior* things, standing higher than lower organized matter which can be traced with the senses, and which therefore can be more conveniently handled by our lower reason. These truths, and hundreds of others, are just as real entities as weight, as dimension, as number, as distance, as color, or as any other quality in matter.

Such truth is of transcendent importance to the individual; because what we call *character* is shaped more by these interior experiences and facts than by exterior influences, in many respects. It

is important to the family. It is the very law of development and of conservation in the household and in society. Moral truths, and social truths, and civil truths—these are higher organized; and on these it is that society is built; and on these society conducts all its processes.

It is then, on this higher form of truth—moral, social, affectional, æsthetic truth—that conviction depends, far more than on the presentation of reasons or dynamic qualities.

If you attempt to convince men that their course is right or wrong, you cannot do it as you would convince a grocer that his pound was under weight or over weight in the scales. There is no such measurable power. You are to address the feeling of right or wrong in men. It is generally complex. It is an emotion of complacency or displacency, as the old writers would have said, in one, two or more feelings in the soul. And no man is convinced in regard to any moral truth, until both the intellect and a certain number of the feelings are put at rest, in respect to it. It may address itself, first, perhaps to the intellect; but it must go deeper,—to the experience of moral feeling which is behind it. What is just, is not apprehended by reason of an intellectual statement of what it is, but from a peculiar experience of conscience. A thing is beautiful, not according to rules and statements, but according to an æsthetic experience in the man himself. And in regard to the higher truths, an emotion is evidence—feeling is reason. You cannot make a man laugh because he ought to laugh. You may analyze a jest, or a flash of wit, and present it to a man, saying, "Here are the elements of mirth; and these being presented to you as I now present them, if you are a rational being you will accept the statement of them, and laugh;" but nobody laughs so. People laugh first, and afterwards think why they laughed. The feeling of mirth is first excited; and afterwards the intellect analyzes that which produced the laughter. It converts into an idea that which was first an emotion or an experience.

And so in regard to every element of beauty or art, a man is not convinced of it by ratiocination. He is convinced of it by his feeling first; and then he brings in the understanding to corroborate the emotion, to heighten it, and to enlarge it.

And that which is true of art, is true of music, of eloquence, not only, but in the still higher range of moral conduct. True reasoning is that which makes a man *feel* that what you say to him is true. I do not care what the reasoning is, emotion is the means of the acceptance of the statement. A feeling of truth is an argument, though

it may be a lame one. If a man says in himself, "I feel, I know, that such and such a thing is true," that feeling is legitimate evidence to that man that the thing is true.

People say, "You ought to require men to present evidence of a good rational conviction, and then they will stand more permanently on the ground of belief. To address the feelings is to create a sudden transient conviction which may not have any permanence." There is some truth in that; but, nevertheless, a man may attempt to produce a conviction by an intellectual process, and yet not produce that which amounts to a settled belief. Many men have been bombarded all their life, and have not been taken, because it was attempted to convince them purely by the intellect, the æsthetic and emotive elements being left out of the question. Hundreds of men have all their life long fought against the doctrine of divine sovereignty, as presented in a purely intellectual proposition, have heard it stated over and over again, and have tried to believe it, but never did believe it until at length there came a presentation of it emotively, and imaginatively, when by some illustration there was kindled in their mind a sense of the sweetness and beauty of Fatherhood in God. And then, when once a conviction of that Fatherhood had entered into their soul, there came a desire that One possessed of such an attribute should be supreme, and have liberty to do as he pleased. And instantly there was a conviction produced which all the reasoning in the world would not have made. And were not these men soundly convinced because they were convinced through their taste and affection? Were they not convinced, because it was an illustration rather than an argument that appealed to them? That which makes a man feel that truth is truth, that right is right, is to him evidence. That which makes a man feel inside, "This is true," is evidence for him. And though such evidence is more or less imperfect, it is evidence.

Therefore evidence is sometimes intellectual, as respects the lower forms of truth; but as you go up in the importance of truth, the evidence of it becomes less and less purely intellectual and factual. It becomes more and more emotional. It is taste, it is fear, it is hope, it is conscience, it is æsthetic inspiration, that determine whether men will take this, that or the other view of truth. So that the magazine of evidence is to be found, not in the lower forms of reasoning, but in appeals to the moral consciousness, to the conscience, to the emotions. And then, when men are alive or sensitive, and there is the presentation of a proposition or a quality of truth to the feelings, there will be found in them a response that convinces them, and settles the conviction.

This is to be followed up afterward by intellectual instruction, and by a process of investigation, to see whether the conviction is founded on good reasons, or on reasons not loosely stated. And then they will not only be convinced, but will be permanently convinced, and convicted, and converted, in so far as belief is concerned.

It is not, therefore, a small nor an accidental truth that is declared when it is said that *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness;* or, in other words, that the convictions which go to produce what are considered a moral and religious life, are convictions which spring mainly from the emotions, from the moral sentiments, from the taste, from the inspirations of feeling, and are not purely intellectual, dogmatic convictions—though these are not, in their place, to be despised. It is not dogma that anybody should object to: it is *despotic* dogma. It is not dogma that men should repudiate: it is *dogma making believe that it is the only form which truth can assume.* The hateful thing about it is that dogmas, which are a reduction of truth to intellectual statements of facts, or abstract truths, have usually assumed that they were the highest forms of evidence, and of the most authority; whereas universal experience shows, that while they are beneficial, they are practically of secondary importance in producing living belief in regard to the highest truth.

From the ideas enumerated in these views it is, that we see how men who are substantially of the same feelings, run generically toward the same general convictions. In any age the feelings and the affections of the age have much to do with the adoption of the philosophies and the politics of that age. If men are living by their lower nature, they will tend toward wantonness of intellectual philosophies; they will incline to the things that relax restraint, that break down responsibility, and untone the conscience. And, on the other hand, good men, pure men, men under the influence of a high degree of moral culture, in any age, will always tend to unity, on the ground of virtue and self-restraint, and responsibility, and refinement. And in any age the feeling that belongs to men in masses, largely determines the direction which they take in intellectual, religious and political philosophy.

Men may differ very largely in regard to moral and religious truth, and yet be honest; and to a degree both sides that differ may be true. One man may be an Arminian—honestly and thoroughly an Arminian; another man may be a Calvinist—honestly and thoroughly a Calvinist; they may stand apparently at antipodes; and yet they may both be right.

What! is it possible for men to stand on two sides of a common truth, and yet be right? No, not if either of them is wholly right; not if either of them has in himself the perfection of truth; but no man ever sees the whole truth. Nobody ever sees truths except in fragments. A truth is so much and so large that one man may be on one side, and see his share of it, and another may be on the other side, and see his share of it; and both of them may be right, though both of them are imperfect. They may be partialists, each of them *is* a partialist; but their views of that truth may not be false.

Where, for instance, a man has a sense of government; where, as a certain school would say, self-esteem and the feeling of authority are largely developed in a man, he will sympathize with the ruling force, and will be a Calvinist. Where, on the other hand, a man has benevolence very large, and his social feelings are in the ascendency, he will sympathize with the governed, and not with the governing power; and he will be an Arminian. And both of them will be right; because there is an element of truth in both views. There are few who are large enough to take the whole of one side and the whole of the other side of the truth. One takes one element, and runs away with it, and organizes around it; and another takes another element, and runs away with that, and organizes around it. And both of them have something of the truth, though neither of them has the whole of it. The largeness of the truth is lost in the case of each; but each is sincere in his system of theology. Each has a philosophy of religion which is different from that of the other, and each is true to himself and his convictions, and each does good in one way or another. Each is part right and part wrong. They are both partialists.

We each take a mouthful of truth out of the whole; but none of us takes the whole of it. So that men may be generically united, but specifically different in their judgments of truth.

Take a familiar instance. In a given neighborhood are twenty husbandmen. They may all be good husbandmen. They may all carry on farming profitably. They may all be said to have a wise method of treating the soil and of treating crops. And yet, every one of them will treat his soil differently from every other, and every one of them will handle his crops differently from every other. But generically they agree, though specifically they vary. They are united in the general results which they are aiming to work out; but they are not united in the special methods by which they are to be brought about. And yet nobody thinks of putting them by the ears because specifically they disagree, when generically they agree.

It is not probable that in any street or neighborhood any two

householders keep house alike. They may all be respectable people, they may all be good housekeepers, they may all be bringing up their families well; and yet, they all differ in their modes of doing these things. They rise at different hours, and have their meals at different hours, and spread their tables differently, and cook their food differently, and bring up their children differently, and manage their servants differently, as you would learn, if you could hear them talk about each other. Nothing would be more instructive than to hear the housekeepers in a neighborhood discuss each other's economy. Each is careful in some direction, and profuse in another; and each criticizes the others' profuseness. But economy is a question of final results, and not of special methods. All through different households you find disagreement in specifics and agreement in generics.

Now, throughout the world, churches are artificial households. And many of them are good households. There are sects, scores of them, as there ought to be; and though they specifically differ, they are generically promoting good morals, inspiring spiritual appetites, and lifting men up from the plane of the passions to the plane of the moral sentiments. They are teaching men to live, not by sight, but by faith. And one does it in one way, and another does it another way. One does it by ordinances and symbols, another by silence and by the teaching of the Spirit, and another by intellectual disquisitions. And so there is some general unity between them, though they are running in their own ruts and channels.

A man's feeling has much to do with what he believes; and it is from what is inside of a man, and not from what is outside of him, that we are to determine what the truth is. There is belonging to every man a personal element, which to a very great degree has been overlooked, but which is of vital importance—certainly to the charitable judgments which we form of men.

We know that in scientific processes—that is, in dealing with the lower forms of truth—different men are equipped not only with different powers of eye, and different sensibilities of ear, and different aptitudes of nature, but that a distinct judgment is taken of these things. In measuring transits, in attempting to perform the more delicate operations of making observations in astronomy, it is found that one eye is more sensitive than another; that one eye acts quicker and sees quicker than another when a planet touches the limb of another planet. And these individual peculiarities are reduced to mathematical expression. Astronomical observers have what are called their "personal equations"; and in every observatory in Europe you will find that allowance is made for the peculiarities of persons in the matter of seeing, and that their personal

equations are used to correct and regulate the results of their observations.

Now, moral astronomy has some need of personal equations—though they have never been applied, and though it would be very difficult to apply them; for what men believe depends very much on how they are made. And it is absurd to talk about people believing alike. I believe as you do? No. Nobody believes as I do, because nobody is made as I am. The elements which enter into the composition of the human mind are not mixed in precisely the same proportions in any two persons. No two men have the same sensibility or the same training. No two men are precisely alike. All have the same faculties; the alphabet goes into everybody; but the letters—the A B C's—are put together differently, and the words are spelled with infinite variations in different persons. And not only are they in different proportions, and in different degrees of strength, but sometimes one predominates and sometimes another, in the same person. Sometimes the moral feelings are first, and sometimes the social affections, and sometimes the intellectual powers. These qualities exist in different persons with infinite variations and combinations. What a man sees when the truth is presented to him depends entirely on the strength of the qualities that are in him, on the proportions in which they exist, and on the relative degrees of sensibility which they have at the time.

The impressions which come to the consciousness of different persons are not the same. The impressions which come to your consciousness and mine, if you could see and measure them, would materially differ. The character of men's moral structure has much to do with determining their convictions. And the attempt to make all men see and feel the same things is just as preposterous as it would be to make the mark of one man's foot in the sand, and attempt to compel everybody else's foot to fit that mark exactly. Stakes have been driven, flames have been kindled, racks have been turned, and blood has flowed out by Amazons, in that which nature abhors, and the race abhors, and God abhors—the attempt to make all men believe the same things in the same way. It has been sought to run men in molds, as it were, so that they should come out as dollars from a die. But men are made on the principle of infinite and eternally increasing variations. And beliefs, though they agree generically, vary specifically—and must and will do so. Truth will be truth, right will be right, goodness will be goodness, of course. In general directions they are the same, though they differ in minor points.

In traveling on the prairies of the West, when we came to a slough, or morass, we would find fifty roads branching out; and one preferred to go in and out on one side; another preferred to pass through, a few yards from a certain point; another preferred to cross at some other point; but I noticed that the main idea was, for everybody to get through the slough, though they did it by almost as many roads as there were travelers across the prairie, during certain weeks and months of the year. Of course, all roads were not equally easy and equally good; there was a choice of ways; but every man took the liberty of going the way he thought the best.

And so it is in respect to variations of belief. Men follow their subjectivity. They follow that particular form of belief which springs from conviction of feeling in them. If human influence and power could have made men alike, and kept them alike, in belief, it would have been done; but that was not in accordance with the divine decree. It seems to have been designed that every man should have a personal experience of his own; and that while all should maintain right directions, and cultivate a true moral character, and be united generically, they should specifically not lose their individuality or separateness.

This is the fundamental difference between Protestantism and Catholicism. Catholicism does not mean Pope, nor Cardinal, nor this ceremony, nor that creed. The question involved is simply this: Is the individual at liberty to follow the charter which he finds in himself, or must he follow a charter which is prescribed by human authority? Catholicism says that every man's conscience must agree with the Church's conscience. It says that there is a great unitary conscience, and that every man must be guided by that. But Protestantism says that every man has a right to his individual conscience. It holds that he ought to instruct it so that it shall be a fit and reliable guide. And it makes every man responsible for that to which his conscience leads him. According to Protestantism, when it comes to the issue, no man has a right to follow any other conscience than his own. And when a man says, "I must follow my conscience," he is a Protestant.

I had the pleasure of seeing Father Hyacinthe when he was here, and telling him that he was a Protestant. He had just been saying, "I cannot be unfaithful to the truth as it has been delivered to me." "Stop!" said I, "you are a Protestant, and out of the Church." He had said that he could not bear to go out of the Church; that he dreaded schism, or heresy; that it was like poison to him. Nevertheless he *was* a Protestant. When a man says, "I must follow my God according to the light which *I* have," that

moment he is a Protestant. And I think Christ's own ideal of a man was a *man:* not merely a member of the human family, but an organized *man.*

This will lead to many collisions, many mistakes, many imperfections. But tell me of anything that is not full of imperfections. This world is not a perfect sphere, and it does not turn out perfect work. It is a world in which we are taking preliminary steps.

"When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

So says the apostle. He understood, as well as anybody else, that men are all partialists. Paul, the great theologian, after many years of thought, and visions, and rapturous associations, and after, to his own seeming, having been lifted up to the seventh heaven, declared that he saw things fragmentarily.

"When that which is perfect is come [the whole of truth], then that which is in part [the partial view] shall be done away."

And not till then will it be done away.

We are certain, then, that truth is in many special, minor respects different to different men. Love, mercy, justice, authority, responsibility, freedom—these, on the palette of a man's consciousness are not simple uncompounded colors. They are made up of many colors. They have a great variety of tints. They differ endlessly in their shadings.

There will be objections raised to these views. "Why pay any heed," men say, "to facts and arguments, if belief is subjective, if it belongs to the subject himself, and arises from the way in which he is constituted?" Because, in many respects we are constituted alike—or proximately alike. Though we vary in specials, we agree in generals. And facts, to multitudes of men, are in many respects substantially the same. At any rate, the general exterior is the same. And although we may attach shades of difference to them, and they may work themselves out in the final result, there are enough points of agreement to make men cohere; to unitize them.

But, "May not this view," it is asked, "imply that truth is variable; that it is to every man just what he sees it to be? Is there nothing permanent? Is everything shifting according to the imaginations of men? Is there no solid ground? Are there no firm foundations? Is there no exact truth? Is there no order which a man having, *has*, and can stand on, and be at rest?" I do not know of any. The whole creation has been groaning and travailing in pain until now, and never has found it. You can come to a degree of exactitude in respect to material mensuration—in respect to gravity, or heights, or depths, or lengths, or breadths; but in regard to moral things the world has never more than approximated com-

mon beliefs. And the peculiar traits of nations and races and individuals remain; in spite of every argument to the contrary, in spite of prayers, in spite of all the influences which have been brought to bear against it, the world is just as it always was—only more so. That is, as intelligence and knowledge increase, men grow toward diversity as fast as they grow toward unity.

It is with truth as it is with trees. The part that stands in the ground is a solid unit—the trunk; but the part which deals with the sun, and therefore has in it the principle of life, is forever branching, and branching, and branching. And if a tree hates anything, it is a straight stalk. It wants to bend and turn here and there. And so it goes on splitting and dividing. But does it injure the tree? Does the fruit grow on the twigs, or on the solid part? You know that it is found not on the unit, but on the diverging twigs. The power of truth lies in diversity, and not in unity. In great basilar developments, unity; in the higher elements, ramification.

But it does not follow that truth is a thing of mere individual segregation, as persons have it nowadays. It is not simply my personal experience. My personal experience reproduces a certain amount of that great truth which lies outside of me, and of the race, and of angels—and that is God. I am not able to reproduce the whole of the truth in nature, nor of God in human kind. The truth is complex, and it transcends the bounds of the ordinary consciousness.

Therefore truth is stable and firm, though my share of it may be but little, and though as compared with another man's share it is mutable and variable. Truth is a great substantial entity which lies outside of us all. Our consciousness takes in but a part of it, and a changing, mutable part, at that, but this does not void the stability of the unity of the truth of the universe.

Is a man responsible for his beliefs; were they not created in him and for him? I do not think a man is responsible for his *beliefs;* but I think a man is responsible for his *conduct.* You can get at it just as you please. *The heart* it is that *believes unto righteousness.* You are responsible for being good, and true, and manly, and believing, and loving, and noble in every way. You are responsible for results. Every man is responsible for being honest with himself. A man is responsible to this extent—that he must keep his mind clear. If when I look at a color it is blue to me, I am not responsible for seeing that color blue, though another man may see it green. But if, the color being blue to me, I look at it and say that it is green, I am responsible for a violation of

honesty. Men are responsible for using truly, and under the best conditions, every faculty they have; and when I am true to my organization, when I am true to that which is within me, I am not responsible for the products of that which my mind sees. Conduct and character are results. Believing is merely a preliminary stage. It is a means to an end. And experience shows that men do by different beliefs come to the same general results. That is to say, are there not men in the other churches who are as good Christians as though they were Congregationalists? There are. I am beholden to many Christians of past generations in the Roman Church for their learning and piety and nobility. I see in the Episcopal Church, saints with bishops' caps upon their heads. And are there not just as good men in the Methodist Episcopal Church as there are in the old Episcopal Church? Certainly. And have there not been Christians of the right stamp from the days of John Calvin to the present time in the old Presbyterian Church? Unquestionably. Are there not true and good men in every denomination where Christianity has been developed? Yes. Every man who is really God-fearing and man-loving has that for which alone belief has any value. The object of believing is to produce goodness.

Now, if from every diverse point, if from convictions which vary in each man, one can reach forth with his heart, though it be small at the bottom, and big at the sides, and flat at the ends, and *believe unto righteousness*, that is enough. The thing is *righteousness.* That is the fruit, according to the declaration of the Master.

When John sent to Christ, being discouraged in his prison life, saying, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" in that same hour Christ performed many wonderful works; and he said to the disciples who had come from John, "Go"—what? tell John that this is my doctrine? tell John that I am the Messiah? tell John that I have fulfilled all the prophets? tell John that I am co-equal with the Father? Not a word of it—"Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them."

It is as if he had said, "Go tell him that the fruit is the thing, and that is enough."

A man who lives in a spirit of love to God, and of unfeigned charity toward his fellow men, is, under God, a Christian; and that is right-believing, or valuable believing, which makes right-living.

But does not this undervalue truth? Oh, no. If you ask me what is the likelihood of certain beliefs generating holy lives; if

you ask if there are not some modes of presenting the truth, certain proportions, and certain systematic forms, which experience determines to be more effectual in producing right characters than others, I reply, Yes, I think there are. Therefore I think it more important that a man should believe right, and not simply believe. And that makes it important that a man should be educated to believe in certain views. I hold that some forms of belief are better than others, because some forms of belief tend to produce better results than others. But, at the same time, where I see that right results have been produced, I recognize them as being right, no matter what produced them. The object of truth is the production of goodness; and if goodness is evolved, that is the main thing, no matter how it was produced.

When the master gives to a class a proposition in Euclid, it may be that Euclid's solution is the best that can be given; nevertheless, if a scholar does not take to that solution, and gets at the result by some original development of thought, the master accepts it, although he may have taken a long road, and an imperfect one, to come to it. If he solves the problem, he has accomplished the thing which was to be done. There is a difference between a long and a short road; but if the long one carries a man home at last, that is the main thing.

Now, of theologies, some seem to run on a level plain, and the shortest distances; and some take circuits through the wilderness or the morass; and a man has much more weariness, and a great deal longer journey if he takes the latter than if he takes the former; but any theology that takes a man home to Heaven is sufficiently good.

We see from these views, if they are correct, why it is that men find in the Bible such different teachings. It is because in going to the Bible each man carries with him his peculiar disposition and taste, and takes those truths which are most in harmony with his strongest part.

Did you ever see iron separated from sand by a magnet? You go and pick out the iron with your hands, guided by your eyes. You are proud of what you are pleased to call your grand organization. I hear much of the dignity of human nature. With your superior faculties pick out those particles of iron if you can. It is a long and wearisome task, and is but imperfectly done at best. Now take that magnet—that crooked piece of iron without an eye in its head by which to see—and draw it through and through the sand, and it will gather up every single particle of the iron.

Every man's predominant faculty is a magnet. One man's

magnet is love; and when he draws it through the Bible, every element that attaches to the question of love sticks to it. When he reads the Bible, he is no logician and no philosopher, and he does not care about reasoning; but he says, "Ah! how anybody can read the Bible and not see that it is all love, I cannot understand."

His neighbor has been reading the same Bible, but he has gone through it with the magnet of conscience, and there is nothing but justice that sticks to it. He says, "You need not tell me about the kingdom of God being a kingdom of love; it is a kingdom of justice, *justice*, JUSTICE." And he holds every man responsible for exact right and wrong. "Why, it is just as plain as it can be," he says. "Nothing but willful depravity, nothing but *total* depravity, could keep a man from seeing that the Bible teaches that God is a God of justice."

Another man has a magnet, and he draws it through the Bible, and says, "How any man dare talk so familiarly of the Creator is a mystery to me! God is an awful, *awful*, AWFUL being!" It is all veneration with him. All through the Bible he has found the element of veneration.

Another man has a magnet, and, smiling and rejoicing, he draws it through the Bible; and out comes a rainbow; out come beautiful bunches of flowers; out come dripping clouds; out comes delightful music; out comes all that is bright and glorious; and he says, "Why, God is a God of beauty! All through the Bible is beauty."

And so every person takes the strongest faculty in himself, and makes a magnet of it, and goes through the Bible, and takes out that element which is in affinity with it.

Well, is there any harm in this? No, not if you understand that one takes one element of truth, and another another, and another another; not if you understand that one really does find in the Bible love, and another justice, and another beauty, and another veneration. Every one of these things can be found in the Bible; but nobody takes them all. Each man who goes there is a partialist, and takes his own predominant faculty, and draws out what naturally adheres to that.

The reason why there are so many sects, is that men see different sides of the truth, according to the faculties by which they are controlled. There would not be so many sects if men would let each other alone, and not insist upon that part of the truth which they have discovered being the only truth; but man takes a single element of truth, and attempts to compel others to accept that as the sum total of truth. The man of conscience says, "You shall come to my school"; and the man of love says, "I won't." "You *shall!*"

"I *won't!*" "You SHALL!" "I WON'T!" And so there is contention between the adherents of justice and benevolence; and each one feels that it is of infinite importance that men should believe right, and says, "If they will not believe right, I will *make* them." That has been the motto of the Church—"If a man will not believe right, *make* him." Men have been straw, and priests have been husbandmen, who have taken them on the floor of the church, and attempted to flail them to orthodoxy and true believing. It has been taught that men should be held to discipline and correct believing, and not be allowed to wander off from the true faith; and they have been dogmatized and despotized over, and it has been attempted to compel them to believe with the strongest.

Now, I hold to liberty. If your God seems to be pre-eminently a God of justice, I will not quarrel with you. Neither shall you quarrel with me because God seems to me more a Father than a King. Nor will I quarrel with another man to whom God is a God of beauty. I stand in the brotherhood of all those men each of whom has taken his strongest faculty and used it as a lens through which to look at and magnify a certain part of truth, which he is best fitted to see. I put my arms about them, and say, "My brothers, I need you all. I need to have more of justice, and more of love, and more of beauty. You build me up in the elements which you interpret, and I will build you up in the elements which I interpret."

Some astronomers are studying the nebulæ, some Jupiter, some Saturn, some the sun, and so on; and they bring together all the results of their investigations, and unite them; and the sum total makes the one astronomy.

The true Church is that which takes the gifts of all its members, and instead of quarreling with and persecuting and treading under foot each the peculiar views of any other, unites them as far as possible. The members of a church should say to each other, "You contribute your gifts to me, and I will contribute mine to you in return. And such a church, and such church-members, are the best interpretation of the ultimate condition of the one universal church.

God grant that we may have such honesty and simplicity and truthfulness that all that is right in us shall interpret God to us. And may we have humility. May we not suppose that we have found God out to perfection. May we have charity toward all men. And may we have such fellowship as to bind in confidence all, everywhere, who honestly call upon the name of the Lord.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, our Father, by thy Spirit, taught to call thee Father. This is that in thee which most we need. For though we need thine hand to sustain our body, and though we need to be filled with inspiration of thought from thee, most we need mercy and kindness and gentleness. All through our life we are for knowledge but as children. We need to be dealt with as a nurse dealeth with the babe. And, looking to thee, we rejoice that thy heart is paternal, and full of infinite mercy and goodness, and that we need not turn as from the darkness of the cloud and the storm, but that we may find in thee all cheer and all comfort and all gladness, and that so our life may be established in thine as from within it draws all its fullness.

We pray that thou wilt not, O Lord our God! look upon us as upon those around about thee who stand in primal innocence. Look not upon us according to the measure of thine own purity. Remember that we are but frail dust; and like as a father pitieth his children, so, Lord, pity us. And in thy great compassion strengthen us in our weakness. Humble us where we are over-swollen with pride, and comfort us if we be in affliction. Give us strength and patience that we may hold out through the longest day of darkness. And may we be saved by hope as well as by faith, discerning things unseen, and beholding things that are not, that we may be able to stand in the true world invisible and spiritual, though the outward world, material and fleshly, do fail us.

We pray, O Lord, our God! that thou wilt grant to every one in thy presence this morning the manifestation of thy Spirit, according to his need. Give understanding to those in darkness of mind. Give, we pray thee, apprehension of the truth to those that are in error. Grant to those that are burdened and bowed down, patience; and may they behold how the very trees themselves do symbolize their duty, that are bent with the weight of that water which, plunging to their root, gives them life again, and strength to lift up the bough, by and by, when the storm-clouds shall have gone, and the sun shall shine.

We pray, O Lord! that thou wilt be near to all those who are in affliction. Speak to them words which they cannot imagine themselves. May they hear the voice of songs around about them, as if thy good spirits had descended to cheer and comfort them.

Grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who are perplexed as to duty; and to all that are in darkness and trouble in respect to their affairs; and to all that are in trouble and perplexity in regard to their relations among themselves. Enter into the secret experience; go in behind the veil; and grant that thy Spirit may so cleanse, and purify, and sweeten, and inspire, that every one may feel that it has been good to be with the Lord in his sanctuary this day.

Grant consolation to those that are in the presence of their dead. Support those that in fear and grief are with their sick, waiting for the time when they shall die. Be with all who with anguish remember past histories. Let not their sorrow be in over-measure. Grant that, though for a time it is grievous, it may work out in them, and that speedily, the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those that would fain be with us to-day, but are not gathered with us. Be with them in their houses, and homes, and closets, and hearts. May it be a day of rest to their souls. May it be to them a day of rejoicing in the Lord.

We pray for all that are this day scattered through our land, and in for-

eign lands, and upon the great deep. May the Spirit of the Lord be with them. And may their memories of the past be sanctified. And may the sympathies which come back from them to us bring the blessing of the Lord.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing upon all that this day are laboring in word or doctrine. Be with those that go forth to make known the Gospel to the scattered and ungathered. Grant that those who are laboring with painstaking and self-denial may not be weary in well-doing.

Bless those, we pray thee, who are striving for a better life, and have parted from sin, and have come away from immorality. May they find the ground under their feet firm, and may they gain strength from day to day. May they be valiant and faithful in the cause of their new Master.

Let thy blessing go all abroad upon all those who are teaching—upon the school-masters and upon the school-mistresses in this land; and especially upon those who are in desolate places—upon those who have exiled themselves, and gone away from the sympathy of friends, that they may teach the poor and needy.

Raise thou up more and more a kindly spirit among men towards those that are now in our midst, who must maintain their rights by intelligence and purity. Wilt thou incline the hearts of others toward them. And wilt thou draw them out of darkness and into light.

We pray for the schools and colleges and academies in our land. We pray for all those institutions which are for the discovery and for the diffusion of useful knowledge.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the nations of the earth. May they no longer, like the beasts of the forest, use their strength to rend and to tear. May the time come when nations shall help nations; when they shall stand around about each other, even as brothers and sisters are united in the household, in one body, that they may all help where each is deficient, and rejoice where each is strong. Make haste, we beseech of thee, and bring in that latter-day so long promised, and so long delayed. And may the glory of the Lord at last shine through all the earth.

We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, wilt thou bless the word spoken, and may it be for our edification. May we be delivered from error, and purified in heart that we may believe more perfectly. May we trust in such truth as we have; and may we look forward to that more blessed day when imperfections and limitations shall have passed away, and when we shall be developed more, so that all the nobler and higher truths which now are beyond our vision or our imagination shall be made known to us. And then may we meet together to rejoice with one another with supreme love, and power, and truth, and justice, and goodness. And to thy name shall be the praise, forever and ever. *Amen.*

THE GLORY OF JEHOVAH.

"And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."—Ex. xxxiii. 18, 19.

"And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children unto the third, and to the fourth generation."—Ex. xxxiv., 5-7.

Moses was the one great man of antiquity. Although there is an element of venerableness in the patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—they stand in our imagination rather as great frescoes. They are types of certain natures; but they said and did little which was worth recording. Though they were great men in their times, judged by the standards of those times, they have left as a legacy very little. But Moses, as a thinker, a legislator, a poet and an administrator, was great, not only as measured by his own age, but as measured by any age. His institutes are not worn out. Aside from that wonderful people who have based their whole economy upon the Mosaic Institutes, the spirit of the Mosaic economy has been breathed into universal civilization.

While it was given to other nations to develop the intellectual side of human nature, and the side of beauty, it was given to the Jew to develop the moral side. And from that economy which Moses himself founded, and for a long time administered, sprang influences which have changed and developed the civilization of the whole globe.

Moses began his public career at a time when most men are ready to die, or are very old; for he was eighty years of age when he undertook to lead the people forth from Egypt. For forty years, beginning at eighty, he administered national affairs, leading that people through the desert, and to the borders of the promised land.

SUNDAY MORNING, June 11, 1871. LESSON. JOB XXXVIII. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 199, 128, 888.

And it is said that when he died his eye was not dimmed nor his natural force abated. In recounting the great worthies of the then antiquity, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews mentions, of course, Moses, and speaks of him in a manner which implies that he was one who had lived under a tremendous burden, and declares that "he endured as seeing Him who is invisible." In other words, he declares that the inspiration and support of his wonderful life was the conscious presence, and his knowledge, of God.

It becomes, therefore, a matter of more than curiosity, a matter of profound interest to us, to know what that view of God was, what those fundamental ideas of the divine nature were, which Moses received, which sustained him, which inspired him, and which unquestionably laid the foundation of those institutes and that administration which have made his name and nation so famous. This view is contained in our text.

The people had been carried out of Egypt. They had gathered themselves around the base of Sinai. And Moses was seized, as well he might have been, with a profound feeling of discouragement and dread. He had these millions on his hands. There was nowhere on earth that he could look for succor. So he turned himself to God. And we may well believe that in the anguish of his soul he besought God to help him.

"Moses said unto the Lord, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. Now, therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight; and consider that this nation is thy people."

To this God replied,

"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

And Moses said,

"If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth."

The Lord again responded, saying unto Moses,

"I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken; for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name."

And Moses said,

"I beseech thee, show me thy glory?"

And the Lord said,

"I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."

And so, after some preliminary observations and prescriptions,

"The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord."

In other words, as Moses had asked that he might see God's glory, God replied that he should see his *goodness*, as if that was the equivalent of his glory.

Moses was about to lead this great people up from comparative barbarism to civilization; but he wanted some view of God upon which he could stand, and from which he could legislate. He wanted to frame laws and institutions that should go down to remote generations, and he desired, therefore, to have the starting-point of all this work founded in the highest and truest knowledge of God. He desired to see God from that stand-point which would make him a wise legislator, a wise judge, and a wise leader. And he said, "What are those views, O my God, by which I shall shape my whole course and administration, and upon which I shall educate this great people? Show them to me now." He asked the charter, as it were, of divine character. He asked that God would reveal himself in those elementary principles of constitution and law which should be the right foundation on which to build the whole superstructure of the economy that was to stand for ages. And it was in answer to this practical demand that this view was given by God of his own nature.

"And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, the Lord, [Jehovah] the Lord God [Jehovah], merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."

You will observe that in this declaration made for the specific purpose of practical use in the highest offices of the highest life, the very center and substance of the representation is, that God is a God of goodness, though goodness is not to be understood as implying the absence of punitive administration. It is not an administration which excludes pain and severity, if they be needful.

Consider, in reading this description of the divine nature given by God himself to his servant of old, that, in the first place, there is an omission of what are called *the natural attributes of God*. There is nothing said of his creative power. There is nothing said of his sustaining power. There is nothing said of his power at any rate. There is nothing said of his wisdom. There is nothing said of what we are accustomed to call God's omnipotence, his omniscience, or his omnipresence. Not that they are not traits or attributes of God, but they are not the characteristic elements of the divine disposition. These are to the divine nature what the body, with its health, its strength, its skill and its beauty, is to man. They are not unimportant. Every man appreciates what it is to have a good personal

presence, and to have bodily power and vigor. But as civilization develops mankind, without disesteeming physical qualities we learn to put emphasis upon character and disposition. In savage life, he is the greatest man who can lift the most, or hurl the weight farthest, or contend most successfully in battle. In other words, physical strength is the ideal of manhood.

But as civilization goes on, we transfer skill from mere muscular development to mental capacity or power, whether it be in commerce or politics, or any other sphere of the intellect.

And as civilization still develops, we rise higher, and then man's worth resides, not in his bodily conditions nor in his physical skill, nor in his intellectual power, but in his inward character and disposition.

We have, then, in ourselves, an analogy or intimation of that which appears in this declaration of Jehovah to his servant Moses, where, passing by, as it were, all the incidentals—the elements of mere power or intellect, or wisdom—he asserts that his divinity resides in the central element of goodness. When asked to make his glory manifest, he says, "I will show you my goodness," as much as to say that his goodness was his glory.

If you analyze this disposition upon which God places emphasis as most eminent and characteristic, you will see how it still hangs around about that one center; how it lingers and repeats itself in every various form. As a sweet phrase in music, under Beethoven's hand, forever changed, and yet forever came back again to the theme, so you will find here that this one central notion of divine goodness, changing and altering, never is lost, but continually, from beginning to end, is made to reappear.

"The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth [what we mean by fidelity], keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty."

This undertone is just as necessary to our conception of divine goodness as is the idea that all responsibility and all penalty are not malign, either by accident or by intent, but are the applications of goodness itself.

God's long suffering, his patience, his fidelity to men, his leniency, his forgiving disposition, which goes on and on and on, must not be interpreted into moral laxity and indifference. It is the goodness of One who prefers, with infinite preference, that which is holy, and just, and pure, and good. It is the goodness of One that will not leave untried all appropriate influences to maintain, to increase, and finally to make victorious that which is resplendent in purity and

ineffable in goodness, though he "will by no means clear the guilty."

God is not good in any such sense as that he is weakly indulgent. He desires happiness in men; but he desires to promote happiness in them by making them susceptible to happiness—by developing them so that they shall be able to be happy.

This conception of God, as a vindicator of Law, is what experience teaches, and what Providence has taught. If there be one thing which nature teaches more clearly than another, it is the doctrine of penalty; that is to say, the doctrine that disobedience of law brings suffering. And at the same time nature also teaches that obedience of law brings healing and forgiveness. It has been believed that nature taught nothing except that the man who sins shall die; but nature does give a hint of something more than this. He who, disregarding the laws of gravity, by springing over a precipice breaks his leg, certainly learns penalty; but if he goes home and has his leg set and put in splints, and the bones knit together and acquire new strength, he learns remedy and forgiveness. When a man is sick he is taught that there is penalty for transgression; and when he gets well he is taught that there is mercy for transgressors. Resiliency and recuperation are indications of mercy, as much as suffering and pain are indications of justice, on the part of God. Nature teaches penalty; and in an obscure way it also teaches remedy. Providence likewise teaches penalty and remedy. And the great experiences of mankind have shaped themselves into the universal feeling that to do right is in the main to court happiness, and that to do wrong is in the main to court unhappiness.

Men feel, also, that penalty, as well as remedy, is an instrument of benevolence. And there are those who blame their neighbors for making too little use of penalty. There are those who pride themselves upon not being too lenient. "I love my children too well to indulge them in things that are not for their good," says many a parent. We look upon the children of others that have been spoiled by indulgence, and say, "Weak mother, to let her children do as they please, because she is fond of them! Foolish parents, to give their children pleasure to-day, which will deprive them of pleasure to-morrow!" We say of stern parents, "They are very severe; but see how their children are turning out." The result determines the wisdom of the course pursued; and if under an administration of sternness children turn out well, we cannot but praise that sternness, because it proves itself in the end to be kindness. Nothing can be more really kind than the infliction of suffering for the sake of making joy more abundant in the future.

Therefore, this declaration, which was coupled with the description of the divine nature at this very early period, is one which runs with human experience and observation, and belongs to our sense of that which is right and true—the declaration of goodness seeking goodness, and doing it, too, wherever necessary, at the expense of suffering, or by the use of pain.

But the central point is this: is there a Divinity that uses pain for the sake of pain? Is there a government over this universe in which there is suffering without any other end than suffering? Can there be any better definition given of malignity than that it is a voluntary administration of suffering merely for the sake of suffering? The question which every man wants solved for himself, just as much as Moses did, is, What is the center from which penalty springs? Does it come from passion, does it come from wrath, does it come from wounded self-esteem, in any super-eminent power? What is the origin of the pain and the penalty which we see in the lower forms of life where men are in contact with material things? What is the origin of the pain and the penalty which we see when men have risen into their social relationships? What is the origin of the pain and the penalty which we see at large in society, and which develop themselves on every hand? What is the controlling influence in which this strange quality of pain-bearing inheres?

There have been those who said that it belonged to a separate divinity—to a cruel and hating One that loved blood and suffering. But men could not accept that view, it seemed so contrary even to their low and crude ideas of love.

There have been others who joined pleasure and pain in one administration, and taught that the divine character was one which, when we were reconciled to it, was full of goodness and mercy, but which, when we were unreconciled to it, was full of wrath and hatred and pain-loving. Yea, it has been taught that "for the sake of his own glory" God created pain, and stamped it with immortality. It is stated in that ancient formula of faith, the Westminster Confession, that "not with foresight of good or evil, not on account of any supposed misconduct, but for purposes of his own free-will and glory," God did create a race, large portions of which, not being elected, would go on to eternal punishment, suffering forever and forever remedilessly—and all "for his own glory"!

Now, when Moses asked of God that he would show him his glory, he said, "I will make my goodness pass before you," thus declaring that his goodness was his glory. And when all things were arranged, and Moses went up into the mountain as he had been com-

manded to do, the Lord descended and proclaimed the name of the Lord; and then he went on to declare what the divine elements were, saying,

"Merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty."

This one little qualifying phrase, *and will by no means clear the guilty*, was all that he said on that side. But look at the amplitude, the repetition, the richness of description, the fullness, the tropical luxuriance, which were employed in evolving the idea that the central nature of the administration of God is one of mercy—and that, too, against men that transgress, imperfect men, undeveloped men, sinning men, wicked men, bad men. It would seem as if it were meant to imply that there was depth after depth of mercy in the divine administration, that there was forgiveness for sins of every kind and degree, and that through long eras he manifested his patience toward the transgressor. He made the declaration full and large. But lest men should say, "There is no danger in sinning; if I transgress I shall be forgiven," he, as it were, says, "Ah! do not think that you can escape. I will not forgive finally the unregenerate. I will administer goodness for the sake of reclaiming the wicked, and I will exercise patience toward them; but rather than give them over, I will apply pain and penalty to them."

And here we see the declaration of that great law of inheritance of which so much is made in our day, and which was disclosed under the Mosaic dispensation ages and ages before it was disclosed by what we see in modern philosophy. That the iniquity of parents is visited upon their children from generation to generation, we know. We know that the drunkard's child is apt to be a drunkard. We know that the child of an insane person is apt to be insane. We know that the constitutional peculiarities of father and mother are apt to show themselves in their offspring. We know that the perversities of a man's heart are likely to go down to his children. We know that the sins of one generation sometimes entail their evil consequences upon the four or five generations which follow them. We know that these things are a part of the economy of the whole universe, so far as we have been able to observe it.

But you will observe that the emphasis of the divine character lies in the direction of goodness, and that the qualifying phrase, the alternative, limiting notion is that of penal justice, which is interpreted and directed by this great central element. It is a justice which seeks to make men just. It is pain-bearing for the sake of taking away pain. It is remedial infliction. It is penalty tempered with love. We have the declaration of God that all the wide sweep

of pain and penalty which we see in society is simply a part of the economy of divine goodness. It springs from that center. It originates in a goodness which produces pain only where the production of pain tends to produce happiness by and by. The divine character is represented as being an orb of bright, glowing, glorious goodness in all its forms and developments; and yet it is capable of producing pain wherever pain may be necessary to the well-being of those under its administration. And this was the interior view which mankind needed.

Let us recur to the fact that Moses asked for a view of God on which he should found his administration. "Give me," said he, "that view of thyself and thy nature and thine administration that shall enable me to govern these people aright. I am to make laws; I am to frame institutions; I am to administer justice between man and man; I am to give men the word of instruction in respect to their households; and let me come back to the Fountain of truth and knowledge. What art thou, oh my God? Teach me thyself, and then I shall be able to teach this people."

Thus solicited, God gave this representation of his character: that it was chiefly a character of love and mercy. But to this representation was added the fact that this love and this mercy would arm themselves with penalties sufficient to exterminate evil and to promote good.

It was this that Moses took as the basis of his administration. And it would be a matter of great interest to show, what might be shown—that Moses' administration, founded on that central notion which he derived from God's nature and character, branched out into statutes of humanity which marked it from all contemporaneous governments.

There is one other part of this passage which I have not emphasized. When Moses besought God that he would show him his glory, God said,

"I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee."

And then he added,

"I will be gracious on whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."

There is, to me, great significance in that declaration of personal liberty on the part of God. Not only is this fact very significant, but it is very needful in our time. For there are but few men who have a God that has any liberty. If you ask natural science to-day what God's functions are, it will tell you that he has, as an Artificer, invented and set a-going a vast machine, and that his particular business now is to oil the wheels of that machine, and watch the

operation of it. When I ask a man to pray, men sneer and laugh, and say, "Do you suppose that God is going to stop turning the wheels of the universe, and is going to change the action of his laws, to accommodate any man, or any number of men? Not a bit of it. If you want anything, you must do exactly what other people have to do. God is grinding all the time, and those that help themselves will have such elements as are being supplied at his mill; but that great machine is not going to be stopped to put in any little elements different from these, which this or that man may want or ask for. God is a great mill-grinder, and he stands grinding out by natural laws those things which it is designed that men shall have, and no one can have anything except that which comes to everybody." When I plead for the inspiration of God's wisdom, men say, "Do you suppose God is going to hear you, and give you a gift of special inspiration? It cannot be done. Nature is immutable." Nowadays philosophers are talking about the immutability of great natural laws, and laughing to scorn our theologies and teachings in regard to the power of God to answer the prayers of his people. They say, "God has arranged everything, and he governs by laws, and he cannot change those laws, and therefore he cannot grant special favors."

Well, what is God? These philosophers cannot tell. "He is something in the nature of laws," they say. All that philosophy knows about him is law, law, law! There are some who have come so near to the true definition of God that they are now willing to admit that these laws are the result of force; and they talk about the great Force of the universe. They are fashioning a new name for God, on the same principle that our name was formed. For *God* is a contraction of the word *good;* and our God is *Goodness*—a name derived from the great central characteristics of the divine character. Modern philosophy is dispossessing us of that name, and is putting Power in the place of it. And God is going to be Power—that is to say, a Power which, having made this great machine originally, keeps it running, and tinkers it occasionally when it gets out of repair, but which cannot do anything further than that. It is not once thought by these philosophers that the Power which created laws can stand outside of them, or above them, and give new functions to them, or produce unexpected results by them. They ridicule men who have faith that they can procure special blessings by asking God for them. They say, "If you want anything of God, ask what natural laws are, and use them; and if you are strong enough to get what you want, you will get it, and if you are not strong enough, you will not get it."

Practically the personality of God is taken away, and he is left a pigmy of the universe, once powerful to create, but now powerless to control anything that he has created. It is a peculiarity of the insect species, that when once the fly has made provision for its offspring, it dies; and according to the representations of these modern philosophers, God is a sort of exiguous fly, and having provided the seed for events, and having set the forces of nature in motion, has nothing more to do. The substance of their teaching is, that being omnipotent and all-wise, God marked out the course of events, and that, having by his creating power established the foundation of things, having, as it were, prepared the great universe, there is nothing more that he can do, except to keep on rolling and rolling and rolling the wheels of the vast apparatus which he has brought into existence, with power to keep it a-going, but without power to stop it, or to use it, or to change it, or to modify it in any way.

Therefore there is great significance in that declaration which God makes of himself, where, having proclaimed himself to be a God of goodness, he instantly proceeds to declare his personal independence, his individual freedom, the untrammeled power of his will, saying,

"I will be gracious to *whom I will* be gracious, and will show mercy on *whom I will* show mercy."

This is a declaration that God had a right to be gracious to the Egyptians as well as to the Israelites; or to the nations of the Orient, as well as to the nations of the Occident. It is an announcement of God's right to show mercy in the divine administration to nations of different tongues; it is a declaration of personal liberty. This liberty of God to act according to his will inheres in the central element of the divine nature. And to-day, undiminished in juice and freshness, is this declaration of God, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."

In other words, he says, "I am not chained. I am not absorbed in the machinery of the universe. I have liberty to think as I please. I have liberty to use the laws which I have created, or to set them aside. I have liberty to administer outside of them, or through them, or over them, or under them." God is greater than his laws. He is not tied up by them. He can act independent of them.

Men say, "A miracle cannot be." Ah, but why can it not be? If there was a power which made fire to burn, and water to quench fire, cannot that same power, still existing, change these elements so that water shall burn, and fire shall quench water? Is not the power that is competent to create a quality, also competent to change

that quality? The question is not whether it prefers to change it, but whether the power is not there.

Men say, "God administers only according to great natural laws." How do you know?

The trouble with science is, that it teaches of God simply what it perceives of the administration of God in material things, or in what it calls *nature*. It assumes that nature consists of matter. But I hold that the very capital of nature is the human soul, and that the administration of the divine economy in respect to rocks, soils, light, water, electricity, heat, or what not, is mere nest-building. And as a bird is better than the nest in which it is hatched, so man is better than the world in which he was created, and which was created for him.

Now, if you take the human soul as a part of nature; if you take the facts which human experience develops as belonging to the realm of nature; if you take human character as the result of the action of the forces in nature, nothing is more taught than personal liberty, and the power of varying natural laws. I can vary the fruitfulness of natural laws. I can make an acre of land barren as a desert, or I can make it bring me in a hundred bushels of corn. And how can I do it? By using natural laws. Men declare that natural laws are infrangible, invincible, and beyond the control of God himself; and yet they are subject to changeable use by even the human will. I can make the world a wilderness, or I can transform it into a garden; I can pile up machinery, or I can tear it down; I can build cities, or I can destroy them; I can create, or I can annihilate; I can find out electricity, and make it do my bidding; by means of the electric wire I can make the world bustle with activity; I can impregnate natural laws with vitality from my own brain; I can, by my personal energy, produce high civilization—this is but another form of telling what human nature has done—I can do all these things, acting through natural laws; and yet men will stardily say that God, infinite and transcendent, cannot do anything with these laws. They teach us that God is pent up by natural laws which he has organized, that he is harnessed to them, and that he is forever pulling in one direction, unable to change his course—in other words, that he is a mere locomotive on an iron track, and can neither turn to the right nor to the left.

This is a base conception; and it is falsified by your experience and by mine. You and I are a part of nature, and the best part of it. Man is the cream, and the rest is milk.

Consider the understanding and the social affections; consider what a man is in relation to the material world and to his fellow-

men; consider what we can do; and then consider how much more transcendent God is than we are in goodness, and in power, and in wisdom, and in all those qualities which raise us above the condition of the brute, and you will see that all such limitations of the divine nature are preposterous and absurd.

This liberty of God to use the world as I use it; his liberty to change the world as he pleases, according to the good of all his creatures—this great liberty, asserted far back in the time of Moses, needs to be emphasized again and again and again, and particularly in these days when there are so many superficial teachings and thinkings which lead one to suppose that there is no God except science, and that there is nothing in science but fixed natural laws, —a belief which amounts to absolute atheism, the dreariest and most death-like.

But this idea of the liberty of God has another application beside that which is made to science. It has an application to theology. I am oftentimes asked, "Why do not you preach the atonement of Christ more?" I preach the *nature* of Christ. I preach his life and his teachings. I declare my faith that he was God manifest in the flesh. Although the fullness of the divine nature was circumscribed, was not made manifest, was held back by the obstruction of the flesh; yet so much as we see of it I claim to be the real representation of the action of the divine thought and feeling. I preach Christ, personal. I preach his love, his patience, his forgiveness, his power upon the human soul. I preach him as the Author and the Finisher of the faith of every soul that is to be saved. I set him forth in every conceivable way. I preach Christ to the understanding, to the conscience, to the social sympathies, to every side of human nature. I preach him so that he shall comfort, and inspire, and guide, and instruct, and be a power on and in the soul. And after all, men say, "You preach a good deal about the Lord Jesus Christ, but why do you not preach about his atonement?"

What is the atonement of Christ? Is there a Christ, and then an atonement outside of him which is a kind of fourth God? The atonement of Christ is Christ himself. *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*—that is the atonement. It is the inherent and everlasting mercy of God, "Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin," as declared in this Old Testament Scripture. It is the tendency of the divine, loving Soul to recuperate men who are sick—to draw back men who are sinning. Historically regarded, this power of the heart of God, this healing nature of the divine soul, was developed and maintained in the Lord Jesus Christ. I do not say that there are not passages in regard to the life and death

of Christ which hint at relations which he sustained to other parts of the great moral economy of the universe; but as they are simply hints, and are not explained, and are inexplicable, I let them alone, merely saying that there are such hints. But the only thing in regard to Christ that the New Testament does explain, is, that he loves all men, and that he will save all that will let him save them. And the atonement of Christ—of the Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world for mankind—is Love. The manifestation of it, the disclosure of it, was by his earthly life and death; but the thing itself is infinite and eternal, and is in the heart of Christ.

This does away, in a moment, with the old reasoning that God the Father could not forgive until some plan of atonement was arranged, and that he gave his Son to come and die in order that he might forgive. It takes away all that machinery of false philosophy, and presents the truth in its clarity and grandeur and reasonableness. It makes known the better doctrine that God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is Goodness—a Goodness that will not suffer men to go wrong if it can by pain and penalty stop them—a Goodness that will forgive them if they find out their mistake and turn back. The "plan" of Atonement eternally existed in God's own original nature. The central reason why God forgives, is, that he loves to do it.

Why did Howard make the circumnavigation of the globe, visiting the poor in prisons? Did he do it because he saw that so he might achieve for himself praise or glory? No; he did it because that ever-springing sentiment of love in his soul which was but an emanation from God made it necessary to himself that he should do it. It was a feeling in him of undying pity and sorrow that led him to alleviate the sufferings of the poor and the needy. And every man on earth who is never weary of well-doing—of instructing the ignorant; of pardoning those that come short of duty; of letting his sympathy and help brace up those who are in the battle of life—every such man is in himself the spark, the analogue of that nature which is central in the Lord Jesus Christ. Benevolence, love, which administers for the good of men—that is God all over, from center to circumference, and from circumference back to center again. Goodness—a Goodness that will make men pure, and true, and happy—by smiles if it can, but if it cannot by smiles, then by frowns; and if not by frowns, then by pains—that is the nature of God. He works by pain as well as by pleasure; for pain is but the right hand of love, working for the recuperation of the sick. And so he fills the heaven with goodness, and is filling, little by little, the earth with goodness. He is putting down the wrong, and establishing

the right. He is lifting the race upward, and carrying them onward, by joy and by pain, by pleasure and by sorrow, by reason and by affection. By every means, he is striving to unfold the race, and bring them into the summer of divine life, where they, too, shall become free and powerful, because good.

It is this same freedom which God claims for himself when he says, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy"—it is this same freedom which we call mercy in the Lord Jesus Christ. Love, goodness, compassion, shown even at the price of pain—that is God's nature.

As these were the best views for Moses in his time, so they are the best views for men yet. The lower men are in the development of their faculties, the more you will be obliged to use motives addressed to their senses—the more you will be obliged to use motives that are of a coërcive, force-bearing character. On the other hand, the higher men are, the more you can bring to bear upon them subtler, finer inducements to right and dissuasions from wrong. And the latter influences are the more effectual. Mere force is not sufficient to reclaim men. A malign God will never make a virtuous world. A stern and vengeful God will never make men afraid to sin, to any great extent. It certainly will not draw them back when they have fallen into sin.

The child has gone wrong, and the father's brow is clothed with wrath; his pride is wounded; his sense of right is outraged; and he comes down on the trembling child as the thunder-storm comes down on the tender herb: and the child braces himself up, and endures as best he can; but he is not reformed. On the contrary, he is driven off further and further. But when the father is gone, and the child lingers in the distance, and the mother hovers near him, she gently puts her arm about the child, and draws him tenderly aside, and with sweet voice speaks to him;—he breaks down, and in a torrent of sorrow pours out his confession into her bosom. Ah! it is the mother's heart that subdues him. The father's sternness could not do it. Justice could not do it. Hardness only drove him further away.

I do not deny that there is a place where there must be pain, and where there must be an administration of suffering; but I say that all administrations of suffering are void unless they are preceded and superseded by the recuperative and reformatory influences of goodness and love. You cannot make a household good unless you can love it into goodness. You cannot make a community good unless you can love it into goodness. You cannot make bad men good unless you can love them into goodness. I

do not think that it is in the power of penitentiaries to save men, as long as they are under the management of selfish, grasping office-holders. I do not think that one poor starveling chaplain can save from five to eight hundred men as long as the money which should be applied for their reformation and evangelization goes to reward politicians for their party service. I have no doubt that much of the mismanagement of our penitentiaries is the result of inexperience and weakness—that weakness which is meant when it is said that the law *was weak through the flesh;* but when I look at the way in which we deal with criminals, I feel that there is no other such humiliating and pity-inspiring spectacle of the meagerness of the soul of man in the great recuperative element of love, as is manifested in our attempts to restore to the way of virtue, men who have wandered into the path of vice.

There is only one place that the gate of heaven is but a hand's-breadth from; and that is the family. It is there that the father and mother make suffering for the sake of saving suffering. It is there that the parent bears the sins and sorrows of the child. It is there that the stripes are laid upon the parent's back by which the child's trangressions are healed. But outside of the household how wretched is the attempt of men to save their fellow-men! When a man has once done wrong, he is kicked down the street, and whispered about and hooted at, and can no more get back to honor and respectability than a gull can fly against a tornado. The wrong-doer is everywhere met with a spirit of revenge. On every side are the symbols of destruction. There is the flail, and there is the sword. There is also the cross—but it is the victim that hangs on the cross, and not the Substitute. And what we need more than anything else, in our laws, in our institutions, and in our public sentiment, for our cities, and towns, and villages, is this view of the character of God which ascribes to it goodness, mercy, gentleness, kindness. We have tried cruelty, and it has done little good; we have tried acerb and unflinching justice, and it has not been adequate to the emergency. We have tried views of God which put no intensity upon purity and goodness, and they have done good in some directions, and have done harm in other directions. What we want is a view of God which makes him, not one that does not care for sin, but one that does care for it, that hates it, that strives against it, and that sets his heart and all the enginery of the universe against it, not for the sake of tormenting men, but for the sake of saving them. We want a view of God which makes him one who uses pain as a remedy for evil, and who punishes men for their good. Looking through all the endless ages of eternity, there is no point where God can be

happy while he sits brooding upon immedicable pain. Somewhere let us hope the Universe will reach the glorious limit of suffering. "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Every year, the sun, that strives all Summer with reluctant fruit, at length conquers and turns the acid to sugar.

But, like all other things it comes latest. The apples which keep through the Winter are those that do not ripen until November. Those that ripen in June perish by Autumn. The apples that are the longest lived and the most profitable, are the slowest in coming to ripeness. And let us hope that the long Summer in which such abundant fruits have been produced, and this Autumn in which such glorious hues have been evolved, shall not be sacrificed to mere benevolence. But may there be justice, fidelity, love, kindness, recuperation, long-suffering, patience, to the end, that men may at last be rounded up out of their mistakes and imperfections into the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God.

And now, if you do not understand anything else about this sermon, I beg you to understand one thing—namely, as you go back to your homes to-day, and as you go to your business to-morrow, he will be most like God who knows how to exercise the most of benevolence with discretion. That is the practical application—more discreet benevolence; more long-suffering kindness; more fruitful gentleness; more patience for others, and less patience with yourself. You will be near to God, not by the frequency of the times that you pray in your closet, but by the amount of love that your heart is capable of generating, and by the amount of happiness which shall spring from your conception of the fidelity and the majesty of divine mercy.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We thank thee, our Father, since we cannot find our way to thee, that thou art pleased to condescend unto us. Though we cannot understand thee, nor compass thy being, we do feel thy presence, and know something of thy power. And we rejoice to believe that we are beloved of thee; and that, though we are yet children afar off, we are under way toward that perfect knowledge and that perfected being whereby we shall see God, and know him even as we are known of him.

And now, as we grope in darkness, how much do we need the cheering revelation of thy presence to us! We need to feel thine hand, though we may not be able to trace it nor grasp it. It is a joy and a comfort to believe that thine hand is our best shield; that we are protected on every side; that therein are the resources of might which are for the support of our weakness; that there is vigilance in protection, and fidelity in love. All that we need as we move along the lines of our circumscribed being we find in thee. We live and move and have our being in thee. And though we cannot understand it; though our thoughts soon reach the bound and barrier, and all beyond is cold and darkness, we believe that justice and judgment are the habitations of thy throne, and that when we see thee as thou art, not only shall we be satisfied, but every power of our being will be stimulated, and we shall be lifted up to praise and to glorify thy name, and to rejoice in thee with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant some gleams of this knowledge to us even here. Grant that there may be hours in which the transfiguration shall take place again before our sight. Grant that we may have some discernment of the reality of the great spiritual realm where that true life is of which this is but the symbol. And we pray that we may hear the voice that speaks to us, although it may be inaudible to our outward ear, and that we may feel the influence that comes forth from thee. As to them that are afar off the garden sends out invitation in all its sweetness and fragrance, so may there come wafted to us that are journeying off the shore of the heavenly land those sweet odors which shall tell us of that which we cannot see, that we may know that it is true, and that we may have firm conviction and joy of things that are invisible but real.

We pray for the forgiveness of our sins. Have compassion upon us, not according to our desert, nor according to our asking, nor according to our reforming power. Take the measure of thy bounty and goodness from thyself; and according to the multitude of thine own tender mercies have compassion upon us, and forgive us our trangressions, and heal our backslidings, and draw us more and more with the cords of love to thyself, and make us more and more susceptible of thine administration. May we not dwell where force must needs reach us. May we rise more and more into that higher realm where thou canst, by hope, and by love, and by all the inspiration of faith, guide us. Yea, by the beck of thine own eye, guide us. We beseech of thee, O Lord, that we may live as children in the presence of their parents, where to do their will is joy.

We pray that thou wilt grant unto us this day thy special presence, and administer to all according to their need, and according to thy greatness and goodness. We pray that thou wilt help those who are, under much discouragement, maintaining the battle of life against adverse circumstances, against evil dispositions, and against trials multiform and long continued. We pray that they may endure to the end. And though often discomfited, may they never be defeated. Though cast down, may they never be destroyed, nor think themselves destroyed. Whatever may be the trouble, O let none call out as thou didst, *My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken*

me? May every one yet feel that there is an all-helping, all-loving, all-forgiving, never-forgetting Heart.

We beseech of thee, O Lord! that thou wilt grant that every one may feel that God is his strength, and will never leave him nor forsake him. And if there are any who are afar off, and are slowly and toilsomely ascending the steep way down which they have gone, amidst broken resolutions, amidst discouragements, amidst shame and mortified pride, amidst all environments and hindrances, may God be their strength and their exceeding great reward.

We pray that thou wilt be near to those who are oppressed by adverse circumstances; who are shut in on the right hand and on the left. We pray that thou wilt grant to them such rest that they may be content in the midst of thy providences. Whatever they are, may they not be discouraged from exertion. And yet, we pray that the rebound may not be perpertually jarring and dissatisfying them.

Oh! that men might learn to cast their care upon the Lord, who careth for them. Let us not be scared away from this trust by the consciousness of our unworthiness. If only they might put their burdens on thee who are worthy to do it, who could do it? Grant that we may have such faith in God's largeness and goodness that though we know that we are unworthy and sinful we may venture to put our care upon him, because he loves us and cares for us. And in respect to our children and our friends who are absent and scattered, whatever may be our anxiety and solicitude, grant that we may be able to ease ourselves in thy presence, and to know that the smile of God dissipates trouble even as the coming sun scatters the darkness of the night.

And we pray, O Lord! that we may never be weary in well-doing. May none that have girded themselves for thy service think it a vain thing that they have served the Lord. May none that have sown seed and waited long, yield to despondency, and withhold their hand. May none that have looked with eager hope and expectation for the fruit of their labor, and seen it not, be tempted to intermit, and go away, selfishly seeking after their own comfort. May thy servants go forth laboring in thy cause, workers together with God to the end of life, leaving with thee the issue. May they be faithful, steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as they know that their labor shall not be in vain.

And grant, we beseech of thee, that thy blessing may rest upon all those that are in thy presence this morning, children of sorrow. Wilt thou pour balm upon all wounded hearts.

May all those who reproach themselves with duties unfulfilled, and with kindnesses unrequited toward God and toward men, receive comfort. May those who are conscious of wrongs done to dear ones that have gone from them, and who are now beyond their reach, be consoled of thee. Be with those who mourn from wounds that will not be healed. Be a very present help in time of trouble to those who are in anguish of spirit by reason of their own short-comings. May they know that in thy presence is great joy and delight. Spread abroad thy wings over them; and in thee may they find that rest which they cannot find in themselves. Oh! that men would turn away from these broken cisterns—their own hearts—and find rest in God, the Refuge that never fails.

And we pray that thou wilt be near to those who in the midst of life's duties are bearing its burdens. Fulfill to them thy promise. May they come and learn of thee in meekness and humility that all burdens shall be light, and that all yokes shall be easy.

We pray for those who are growing infirm, and upon whose heads rest the snows of years. Will the Lord comfort them, and prepare them for that

change which is very near, and which, when it comes, shall be but passing from glory to glory.

We pray for all those who worship with us to-day, strangers in a strange place. May they still hear the familiar accents of the loving voice of God. May they in this sanctuary feel that they are in their Father's house, and at home. And during this hour give them rest, and joy in believing. And we pray that thou wilt remember all those who are worshiping everywhere to-day, of every name. Wilt thou deliver from their bondage any that are in error. And give more perfect light to those who know but little of the truth. And grant, we pray thee, that wherever the name of Jesus shall be preached to-day, it may be efficacious in the salvation of souls. May the hearts of men be melted under the influence of the Gospel. Grant that men may be sanctified by the truth. Grant that thy people may be more and more strengthened in those ways which shall fit them to promote the interests of thy cause and kingdom.

We pray that this nation may be purified. May our laws, and our civil institutions, and our seminaries of learning, and all the organizations in our land, be pervaded with the spirit of justice and purity and truth and mercy.

And we pray that thou wilt fulfill the promises which thou hast made to the nations of the earth. We pray that thou wilt exalt the valleys, and bring down the high hills; that thou wilt make the rough places smooth, and the crooked places straight. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. The earth suffers and groans yet. War is abroad, and cruelty hath despotic sway, and the nations sigh, and look everywhere for their deliverer. Art not thou, O God of ages! yet the deliverer of mankind? Come forth, we beseech of thee, and let light come with thee, that all ignorance and superstition may flee away, and that all men may know their birth-right, and that they may rise up and find themselves so strong in God that no power shall be able to oppress them.

And so may all the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And may he reign King of kings and Lord of lords.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, wilt thou bless the word spoken this morning. Wilt thou grant that it may take hold of our heart, of our understanding, and of our life. Thou art still the unwearied Governor. Thou art still administering for the universal good. All pains and all penalties are but so many remedies in thy hand. Even so, thou Physician, behold the world as sick, needing both the knife and the draught. Nevertheless, cut short the day; and grant that the bright millennial time may come, when former things shall have passed away, when sorrow and sighing shall be done, and when the new heaven and the new earth in which dwell righteousness shall have come. And to thy name, Father, Son, and Spirit, shall be the praise forevermore. *Amen.*

SOUL-BUILDING.

"But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." -1 Cor. III. 10-11.

I have read this passage as a part of the opening service. It is highly figurative, and the figure is Grecian. The apostle was writing to the Christianized Jews at Corinth—one of the most magnificent cities of Greece—second only to Athens in its manifold exhibitions of art. Both of them were conspicuous and preëminent for their admirable structures, for their carved statues, and for their altars. Whatever art could do had been done to beautify these cities, and to express in the language of beauty their reverence for their gods.

But, at the very same time that so much was lavished upon temples, very little was given to domestic structures. Nothing, probably, would more disappoint us than a visit to Athens in its palmy days. To have gone there on one of those resplendent days in Spring, when all the air was balm, when peace seemed declared between the heaven and the earth, when the storm had gone and concord reigned, standing afar off, seeing the Acropolis and its treasures, and glinting in the distance the various temples, hearing the shouts of the procession as it moved to and fro, and beholding the pale smoke of the sacrifices as it ascended in the air, one would have thought that he was drawing near to a heavenly city, so beautiful would it seem. But let the skies lower, and the rains descend; let his errands require that he should thread the city on foot, and the vision of glory would soon disappear. The streets were without sidewalks, without pavements, and without sewerage, except that which nature provided. Offal, filth, mud when it was wet, and choking dust when it was dry, squalor, huts seldom more than a single story high, and built of wood, scarcely ever of stone, thatched often, inconvenient, not ventilated, stenchful—these were the things that he would have met with on every hand. Hovels the *citizens* of Athens lived in. Only their *gods* lived in marble palaces. And

Sunday Evening, July 2, 1871. Lesson: 1 Cor. III. 1-17. Hymns (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 270, 607, 1262.

so, all around about the city he would have found, in the midst of the most magnificent architecture, structures the most worthless.

Not long before the apostle wrote this epistle, the great fire which took place in Athens under the consulate, I think of Mummius, had destroyed the residences and the other common buildings; and it is possible that the apostle had this fact in his mind when he spoke thus in the context which I have read to you:

"If any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is."

Here is the foundation, Jesus Christ. See that you have, at least, a solid foundation. And then take care how you build on this foundation. If you build on it as multitudes build all about here—some with mud and straw; some with straw for thatching merely and some with wood—you will take the consequences in the day of trial. If on this foundation you put buildings of precious stones—not gems, but porphyry, or precious marble—the consequences will overtake you in the day of trial. If you build on this foundation, you are right so far; but it is necessary that you should build a right superstructure as well as have a right foundation. It is necessary that you should build solidly. Then, when the conflagration comes your house will stand. But if built of these inferior materials, when the conflagration comes your foundation may not be burned up, but your superstructure will be.

"Every man's work shall be made manifest."

It shall be brought to proof. It shall be seen what it is made of.

"Because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon [that is, upon the foundation], he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

That is to say, when a man has reared a structure that cannot stand the flame, he seeing it coming, may rush out of his house and into the street; but the house will be burnt, though he may be saved. So the apostle enjoins care and prudence upon those to whom he writes, saying,

"Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

What, then, is meant by Jesus Christ as a foundation? A good deal more than we shall be able to make plain, of course. It does not mean literally that he is any man's foundation, any more than otherwhere it means that he is eaten in the bread that is broken, or drunken in the wine that is poured forth. Nor are we to suppose that any special doctrine which has been wrought out by men's thought is indispensable as a foundation to a Christian character and

to Christian hope. The truth as it is in Christ Jesus is indispensable; but truth may assume many forms. As it passed through one kind of understanding or another, it will take on different shapes, and will be in different proportions. And although a man may not stand exactly on the orthodox formula, or in the orthodox church of one or another sect, doctrinally considered, of Jesus Christ, he still may be building on Christ as a foundation. For I apprehend that Christ's name is, at one and the same time, not only the name of a historic personage, who had his individual peculiarities, but a name that groups around about it whatever there is that is excellent in morals, in piety and in spirituality, and whatever is possible in humanity. We are instructed that these elements exist in a higher form in him than in any other; and we are to build on Jesus Christ, regarded as the sum and perfection of all admirable qualities: not upon any particular scheme nor upon any particular method which theology has been fond of attempting to interpret, but upon a distinct character, or the conception of a distinct character such as was set forth in Jesus Christ.

What, then, are we to lay down for a foundation? Is it to be the Lord Jesus Christ as very God? I believe that to be true. And yet I can conceive that one may build on Christ in such a way as to be saved, without having the same clarity of view and the same firmness of vision that I have on that subject. That is to say, the question of how much, whether of quality or of quantity, is required to reach the measure of divinity, neither you nor I can settle; and merely saying that Christ is God goes but a very little way. When you analyze it and look at it closely, you come into a region that is nebulous. If Christ is to you so much divine that he becomes to you an object of imitation, of absolute trust, of faith, and of all the affection that your heart is susceptible of feeling; if he is in such a sense your model and your leader that you are willing to commit to him all that you have to commit to any one, you cannot rise higher than that. And while you may not theologically and technically accept the Lord Jesus Christ, emotively and practically you do accept him so far as you could if you crowned him with the name of the Divine. It is with the heart that a man believes unto salvation.

Jesus Christ is presented to us, I apprehend, as the foundation on which we are to build effectually, not merely because he descended from above and represented, as far as it could be done through the economy of the flesh and the world, certain definite ideas of character, and of the relations of men to God, and of the directions in which duty lies, and of the pattern of true living, but because he

was the perfect epitome and embodiment of that which man should aspire to be in order that he may dwell with God. He is the foundation on which we are to build, because he represents human nature on every side. He was the most perfect model of what man should be. He was the best example, I suppose, that was ever known in regard to habits of labor and of rest, in regard to virtuous health and temperance in all things, and in regard to that elasticity and joyousness which come from normal and regulated activity. I doubt not that Jesus presented himself to those around about him as a noble specimen, physically and socially, of what true manhood should be. In so far as we can understand the character and the relations of Christ, no one can be conceived of as superior to him, or as surpassing him in all his associations with men. He was the highest exemplification conceivable in all those relations which a noble nature can sustain to his fellows. The imagination cannot surpass in its conceptions that which was in him. Nor, indeed, can any one mind compass the whole of it. The effect of studying the life of Christ is, that after you have devoted weeks and weeks and weeks to one phase of his character, and you are called to write it out, when it is finished, the impression on your mind is that you are just ready to begin on that point; and you throw away your manuscript, and try again. And you gather from the Gospels all the materials that you can, and turn them in every way to make a more massive and a more perfect representation; and at last it flashes upon your mind that you are attempting to exhaust that which in its nature is inexhaustible and infinite.

Who can take an opal and paint it? It is only so much as you can at one point see that you can paint. You cannot paint the flash, nor the luster, nor the varying colors. And you can only conceive of actual life. You cannot take in such a nature as Christ's, with all its relations to heaven above and to the earth beneath, and all its social and æsthetic qualities, and all its divine elements, not simply because they elude your grasp, running out beyond analysis and research, but because they are so combined, so changeable, so constantly coming and going, with various phases and in various ways, that no man can give the whole of it. There is always more; and when that is expressed there is still more. There is no end to it.

Whatever, then, one would seek for in morality, or in virtue, or in affection, or in refinements of art, or in spirituality, or in devotion, or in submission to God, or in the most noble passions, or in endurance to the end, or in the grandeur of faith, or in inspiration, you shall find in Jesus Christ. It is not enough to adopt him as a pattern to follow, or to make him a foundation on which to build,

simply in the lower forms of morality. We are to take the whole character so far as it is possible for us to comprehend it. That is the model on which we are to proceed. It is the foundation on which we are to build. But that does not exhaust the duty which is imposed upon us. Although building on this foundation will go far and do much, to my mind the distinctive peculiarity of building on Christ is to take a mind just like God's and put it upon God's mind as its foundation.

"Mystic," you will say. Yes, mystic, undoubtedly. All attempts to interpret into philosophical language that which in its very nature is spiritual, effluent, and therefore inexpressible, involve an element of mysticism. And so the attempt to build yourself consciously on an invisible but living God, so that your understanding shall be underlaid by conscience, the moral sense, all the elements of spiritual life, and the realization of the divine presence—the attempt to build on Christ personally in this way, and to be fitted to him on every side of your nature, is the highest conception, it seems to me, of character-building. In that way one certainly has Christ for a foundation, just as I have explained. When all the qualities of the Lord Jesus Christ are attained, and assumed to be models, in the very form in which he developed them, and you attempt to build on his conceived character as your foundation, you do well; but certainly, in a much higher sense, there is revealed to you the living Saviour as Immanuel—God with us. You may attain to a state in which Christ shall be with you consciously, so that day by day you shall be sensible of an absolute and living presence, and that which aforetime you looked at speculatively, you shall now look at as present, as living in you, thus placing your life upon his, so that in a more transcendent sense than in any other Jesus Christ shall be your foundation.

Now says the Apostle, "Let every man take heed, though he have this foundation, how he builds on it." There be many who say, "We, too, build on the Lord Jesus Christ. We say that as he has represented certain great historical elements, and as he has represented certain universal human elements, we build on those elements. You call them Christ. We call them æstheticism, or philosophy, or science, or what not. These amount to the same thing which you mean by the name *Christ.* A man," they go on to say, "may be built on a right foundation, even though he may not be built on Christ, technically so called, by building on those things which you say, when concentrated, went to form the historical, or supposed historical, Christ." But the Apostle says, "Let every man take heed *how* he builds on this foundation." I apprehend that a man may

hold extreme views, leading almost to the verge of skepticism, and yet have something of Christ Jesus. A man may be saved so as by fire. But take care how you build on this glorious foundation—this living Christ, or Christ as he has been historically developed and philosophically conceived. Be careful that you do not waste that which you have of Christ by speculation. If you take the element of divinity away from him; if you diminish him; if you enfeeble his glory and grandeur; if you make him other than the Saviour of the world; if you substitute philosophy for the reality of personal experience; if instead of faith and love and hope you rest upon the lower forms of morality—good conduct and the like—then take heed how you build. You may be, as you suppose, building on the foundation of the Lord Jesus Christ; but you are building with materials that will not stand the test. Men are building on the foundation of the Lord Jesus Christ wood, hay and stubble; they are building wooden structures, structures thatched with straw, or it may be structures of straw mixed with plaster, *adobe* as it were, and structures of fanciful styles; they are building structures with imperfect philosophies, and with morality not altogether unvulgar, yet having a certain element of truth at the bottom of it; but these are not sufficient. There must be enough of the divine element for a man to hold on to in the day of trial.

The time is coming when everything which a man builds on the foundation of Jesus Christ will be brought to a test. Or, as the figure has it, a conflagration may come down on the city, and then the temples which are built of stones, solidly, on good foundations, will endure. Let flames dash against them—they stand. And when all the city lies in smouldering ashes, all that was grand and beautiful about them before stands up the more magnificent by contrast.

And so, he that has built a fair and noble life, full of beneficence, full of morality, upon the Lord Jesus Christ, has a structure on a good foundation, which, in the midst of bankruptcies, and persecutions, and sickness, and death itself, is untouched and untarnished; and it rises up fair, magnificent, and abides forever.

On the other hand, they who have built on the Lord Jesus Christ with lower and more transient materials, when brought to sickness, and under great temptations, and into severe trials, find that which they have built unable to endure. And it is swept away by the whirlwind, or burned up by fire.

Our Master used the same figure when he said,

"Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand."

They who are familiar with the country to which reference is here

made, tell us that in camping down there, if you pitch your tent in what seems to be a fair valley, but what is really a wide ravine, suddenly, in the night, the rains descending, the waters gather in this ravine, and come rushing upon you in floods before you are aware of their approach, your tent and all your goods are swept away, and all that you can do is to escape with your life; but that if you encamp on the rocks by the side of the ravine, when the rains come they do you no harm, when the floods come you are not disturbed by them, because they are far down below you.

They who have good foundations, and build solidly on them, endure; but they who have good foundations and build poorly upon them are destroyed.

Now, how much error may a man have, and be saved? A great deal of speculative error. I believe that a man may go wrong a great way in his intellectual views of the Saviour, I believe that he may err much in reasoning upon Christ, I believe that he may fall into innumerable mistakes in fashioning a system of religious truth, and yet be saved. That is to say, the heart-element may save him. If one is built upon the Lord Jesus Christ in the love of truth, pure and unfeigned, in meekness, in sincerity, in genuine disinterestedness, in real gentleness, and he seeks by all the force that is in him to do good to others around about him, and not to promote his own good; if he is living in his measure the same life of purity and beauty and love and devotedness that Christ did in his glorious career on earth, then, although his intellect has gone wrong about doctrine, and his reason has gone wrong, he is built on foundations that will survive the day of trial. But, on the other hand, a man may build correctly at every step so far as the intellect is concerned; and yet, if he has not built by the heart on the foundation of the Lord Jesus Christ, he will not stand in the day of trial.

There is great room for intellectual mistakes if the heart keeps right; but if the heart does not keep right, all the intellectual accuracy in the world will not save any man.

It behooves us, then, by all means to build on the Saviour as a foundation. There is no name given under heaven whereby men can be saved but his. I do not mean by this that you will be held to a rigorous and exact view of all that pertains to his nature and character; but tell me of another name that carries in it so much that belongs to the necessity of human nature as Christ's. Tell me of another name of antiquity whose unfolding was such that it carried salvation to men, so that it was safe to take it and to trust it. Tell me of another name that has had such a vital transforming influence upon men. Here is a name that has stood up in history, and

has been perpetuated to our time, and touches the soul to the very quick. There is no part of a regenerated man's nature that does not feel the influence which there is in the Lord Jesus. There is no other historic name that has shown and is showing such a power. There is no name given under heaven that is to be compared with this. All other names are dwarfed and feeble and contemptible by the side of this tower of strength, this magnificent refuge—the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And it is on this that I invite you to build.

You that are beginning life are laying the foundations of your character. You are selecting the materials of which it is to be built. You are in some way or other marking it out. You may not be aware of it. The greatest part of your most effectual life is unconscious. Not the things which men mean to do are the most efficient. The things which they do not know that they are doing are oftentimes the most efficient in shaping their dispositions and lives. You are marking out a plan of life. You never sit down to mark out one; nevertheless it is traced for you. How much of it is animal, how much of it is selfish, how much of it is full of passion and pride, how much of it is sordid and avaricious, how much of it is given to beneficence, how much of it is pure and spiritual, I do not know, and you do not know. But you are building foundations either for Christ or for the world. And beware how you build. Beware what foundation you are laying on which to build the whole superstructure of your life. One builds on health; on the vigor of his body; on his physical power; on the skill of his hands. It is on these that he bases his expectation of success in life. Another builds on his personal accomplishments; another on his large equipments; another on his taste; another on his genius; another on graceful and witching ways. One builds on one thing and another on another. But after all, the true foundation of life is dispositional. And such a foundation being laid in you, have you estimated what you have done or are doing upon it? What sort of a character do you propose to build on that foundation? Are you attempting to build such an ideal character as that which is represented by the Lord Jesus Christ? Or, have you never thought of it? Have you never had a conception of what you would build, one way or the other? Have you taken life as it came, and molded it according to the pattern which has been furnished by the life of Christ? or, have you allowed yourself to be swept down the stream of time hap-hazard? Has there been any conscious unfolding of yourself? Have you attempted to probe and find exactly the foundation on which you are standing? Do you know

what that silent work is which is going on in you? O builder! do you ever think of all the structures that are going up in these great cities? There are none that are building so fast and with so many hands as that structure of which you are the subject.

We read in fairy tales of how great chasms have been bridged over in a night by benevolent spirits, dwarfs, ouphes, and what not; how they hustled together vast rocks, and piled one upon another, and built piers, and spanned them with arches, so that the brave knight could pass over them, and reach the castle, and get his lady-love. We read in fairy tales of how cities have been built in a single night; and we imagine to ourselves how, while we sleep, ten million constructing fingers might carry up the walls, and surmount them with golden domes, and how whole cities might stand in the morning where the night before there was only a wilderness. But there is something more strange than that would be, actually going on in you. There is not a thought that is not striking a blow; there is not an impulse that is not doing mason-work; there is not a passion thrust this way or that way that is not a workman's thrust. The imagination in all directions is building. You think that you are throwing out the net for game; you think that you are laying plans for accomplishment; but back of all the conscious work that is going on in you, back of your visible attainments, there is another work going on. There are as many master-workmen in you as there are separate faculties; and there are as many blows being struck as there are separate acts of emotion or of volition. And this work is going on perpetually. Every single day these myriad forces are building, building, building. Here is a great structure going up point by point, story by story, although you are not conscious of it. It is a building of character. It is a building that is to stand. And the word of inspiration warns you to take heed how you build it; to see to it that you have a foundation that shall endure; to make sure that you are building on it, not for the hour in which you live, but for that hour of revelation, that hour of testing, when that which hath been done shall be brought out, and you shall be seen just as you are. Men are but partially known in this life. You do not know what a man is as long as he is prosperous. You do not know what he is as long as he is untempted. You do not know what he is until he is brought into emergencies. But when the day of trial comes, a man's true character is disclosed. Thousands of men present a fair exterior as long as it is fair weather; but when the storm comes you know the difference between a man of capacity and a man devoid of capacity.

So men are building continually. And they know not the day nor the hour when trials will test them. Take heed, therefore, how you build. Have you that which when men's praises cease will satisfy you? Are you so building that you can stand firm when wealth is taken away? Standing on the right foundation, are you building pigmy dwellings with squalid apartments, or are you building strong and high, after the pattern of Christ's character, with commodious apartments, and as many of them as there are faculties? Are all the walls of this structure being carried up harmoniously? And are you furnishing these apartments amply and wisely? Are you filling your dwelling with the things which are for time, or with the things which are for eternity? Are you gathering into the house of the soul those companions that befit it? Are its guests noble and royal? Are you building your soul-house so that it is sound from bottom to top, and from top to bottom? Are you building it so that it shall endure in sickness, in adversity, yea, in death itself? Are you building it so that it shall stand when you pass through the flood and through the fire?

You think that one hour buries another; but it is not so. You think that you have parted forever from the things which have passed by you. No, you have not. There is much in your life that you think has gone which you never shall part from. It has stepped behind you; and there it waits. That which you have done is with you to-day; and that which you are doing will be with you to-morrow. When the mason carries up the wall, the course of brick which he laid yesterday is the foundation on which he is laying another course to-day. And all that you do to-day on the structure which you are building will remain as a basis for that which you do to-morrow. The work proceeds without intermission; and all that has been done is the under-structure for that which is to be done.

Young man and maiden, take heed how you build. That which you are doing, the work which you are performing, you do not leave behind you because you forget it. It passes away from you apparently, but it does not pass away from you in reality. Every stroke, every single element, abides. And there is nothing that grows so fast as character. There is nothing that is so enduring as character. There is nothing that men think so little of as character, although there is nothing that so belongs to their immortality, and that is so incomparable in importance, as character.

Now, if you are building upon Christ, if you are placing upon the broad foundation of Christ's character the right superstructure,

If you are in vital and sympathetic union with Christ, as your Head, your Brother, your Saviour, your God, and your final Judge, if you are day by day laying every thought, every purpose, every emotion, every element of life, upon Jesus Christ, then, no matter what the contingencies may be, no matter what the events of the future may be, you are safe, and that which you have built will endure.

Go on, oh man, yonder! Add house to house: you are no bigger for your houses. Go on, buy up corner lots, and lot after lot: you are no bigger for having so many lots in your name. Go on; get stocks and bonds and mortgages, buy roads, buy mountains of gold and mines of iron, fill the whole continent with the memorials of your property: you are but a pigmy, after all. Your money swells, and you shrink. You are working and working; but ah! the *you*, the *personnel*, the *man*—what is he? Not what his property is, and not what his reputation is, but just what his character is. And his character is just what the moral elements in him make it. His physical elements are huge as the trunk of a tree: but his moral elements are like one lingering green leaf or two on an old dying tree which you see in the moss-grown orchard. By and by he will die as to the flesh; and then whose will be these houses; then whose will be these mortgages and bonds and lots? They are no part of him. That which makes him a figure in history and a power in the street, is simply what he has, and not what he is. It is that which is to him what a swallow's nest under the eaves is to a barn. It is that which is merely in juxtaposition to him. And so, no matter how much property he buys, when that is gone, what is left is just so much as there is of manhood in him. He was good at figures, he ciphered well; but how was he for benevolence, for spirituality, for faith, for reverence, for true manliness, for that which builds up the soul? He was a dwarf in these things. He was a giant only in his legs. He was a pigmy in his head. The man in him was minimum, and the animal was maximum.

When a prosperous man comes to be tried at death, how much of his life is swept away! That which he has thought of night and day, that which he has labored for all his life long, that which has filled him with envies and jealousies and angers and strifes, that which he has given his soul to buy, stops in the sick room or at the grave. Only his soul goes forth to meet its Judge. Envy him not. Imitate him not.

Oh builders of the soul! remember that the soul's best friend is Jesus Christ. Seek him. Drink in his spirit. Live by faith of him, the beneficent, and the only truly divine One that we can comprehend

with our human understandings—God manifest in the flesh—the very conception and great ideal of all that is pure and transcendent, and noble and divine. Make him your Friend. Build upon him with holy thoughts and holy purposes. And then wait patiently to the end. And the hour of death shall harm nothing, shall take nothing from you, that is worth keeping, but shall translate you into that land where no harm shall come, and where that which was in bud shall break forth into blossom, and where that which was in bloom shall become fruit to the honor and glory of God.

I part with you for some months; and my last word is, *Jesus Christ, the Author and Finisher of your faith; Jesus Christ, God revealed to forgive and to save; Jesus Christ, your Lover and your Friend; Jesus Christ, your Guide and your Judge; Jesus Christ, your eternal Reward.*

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our heavenly Father, we thank thee for the great mercies with which thou hast blest us all the days of our lives. We thank thee that we have not been left to seek our good in the flesh, nor only in this world. We thank thee that we have been enlightened by the truth from above, and have been taught of that higher and better life, and of that nobler character, by which we shall be set free from the entanglements of the flesh, and which shall make us as the spirits of God, although we have not seen them. We rejoice that thou hast taught us of thyself; that we have felt thy power; that we have had communion with thee; that we know that thou art, and that thou art a hearer of prayer. We thank thee for the manifestations which thou hast made to us, and that thou hast spoken to the soul, so that we have recognized our Father; so that our hearts have sprung forth to greet thee; so that we know that we are children of God.

And now, O Lord, we beseech of thee that thou wilt not be discouraged with us, though thy work is slow, and lingers long unaccomplished. Thou art the Author of our faith, and thou must be the Finisher thereof. By the grace of God only can we attain to any goodness. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt continue, though we be backward, and, though we be fractious and disobedient, to inspire us with noble thoughts, and to work in us to will and to do of thy good pleasure.

We pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt grant that the truth may not be as a dead letter in the midst of this congregation. May it, rather, be as a living force among them. We pray for thy people, that they may not have a name only that lives. May they not be dead as Christians. May their lives flame forth so that their light shall shine before men. And may God be glorified in the fruit which they bring forth.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that all the young in our midst may take heed wisely in the beginning of their days; and that they may go on from strength to strength building on integrity and piety.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt teach men how to do good to others, and not to themselves alone. May those that are instructed of God repeat in love to others the wisdom which is imparted to them.

And bless those that teach. Bless those that go forth to minister to the poor and the needy. Bless those everywhere who are bearing thy Word among their fellows, that it may be as salt to them.

We pray for the reformation of morals among our people. We pray that thou wilt hold back the tides of intemperance in our midst. We pray that vice and corruption may cease throughout the community, and that men may fear God and love one another. We pray that industry may prevail, and that everywhere men may be patient with others and severe with themselves.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt spread abroad the tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ into the dark places of this land, and over the whole earth. Make haste to send the power of the Gospel to every part of the globe.

Lord Jesus, we beseech of thee that thou wilt have compassion upon the nations of the world. May those that are suffering the afflictions of war be speedily healed. May those that are in the midst of revolution, and are turned up thereby, and are in confusion, be as the furrow which the plow makes before the seed is cast in from which springs the rich harvest. And we beseech of thee that nations may learn war no more; and that they may need it no more as a chastisement for their sins. May all men live together in peace, and rejoice together in the knowledge of the salvation which is in Jesus Christ.

And now, Lord, we commit ourselves to thy fatherly care, praying that thou wilt do for us, not what we ask, nor according to the measure of our wisdom, but according to the amplitude of thy goodness, and according to the measure of thy wisdom. Give, or withhold. Lay upon us, or take away from us. Do as seemeth best in thy sight. But may we evermore bear about with us the consciousness that it is the Lord who is dealing with us. And grant that we may feel that all things shall work together, under thine administration, for the best.

And when we shall have passed through our life here; when we shall have finished the hours, not many of which can remain, grant that then we may be borne above death, through it, and victorious over it, into the land of the blessed. And there, we will praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt bless the word imperfectly spoken. Grant, we pray thee, that by thy Spirit it may be profitable to those who have heard it. We pray for the young, that they may look up to thee. Be thou their God as thou hast been their fathers' God. Teach them, we pray thee, to give their hearts to thee early. May they have no ignoble conception of a religious life. May they understand the largeness of spirit and the liberty of soul that come only by Jesus Christ. May they take him for their pattern. May they build upon him. Grant that they may build worthily, and of such materials as shall stand the trials and tribulations of this life, and the tests of death, and the searching tests of the life that is to come. Let light, and the glory of God, shine upon every one.

We pray that thou wilt help all those that would come back from darkness and from wandering; all those that are maimed by vices and sins; and all those that look wistfully at the point at which they parted from purity, and would begin again. Lord Jesus, we pray that thou wilt renew them. Comfort and encourage them. Draw them back to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. Go out to the lost; find them; and bring them back to thyself.

Keep this people. Keep all their households. Grant that death may not come near them; and if that which men call death draws near to any one of them, may it prove to be life—life eternal. And prepare all in the things which are lawful.

Grant that we may all of us still be united in the one common yearning and desire for godliness and for heaven. And so, by and by, may we all clasp inseparable hands in that blessed land where parting shall be known no more, and where all imperfections shall be dropped, and where we shall see each other just as we are, and rejoice in that which we shall see of love and purity and beauty.

And to thy name, O Father, to thy name blessed Saviour, to thy name sanctifying, comforting Spirit, we will give the praise of our salvation forever and ever. *Amen.*

RELIGIOUS FERVOR.

"Not slothful in business [*i. e.* not slothful in zeal, in earnestness, referring not so much to secular "business"]; fervent in Spirit; serving the Lord."—Rom. XII., 11.

The aim of the New Testament is to inspire and to create a manhood of a nobler sort than that which falls out in the way of nature—nobler than any known before, in this respect: that it embraces the preparation for two worlds; that it develops spiritual elements unknown to the heroism of the past. It is a manhood which, while it transcends all others, is designed to be accessible to all. It is not a manhood which requires genius, but is one to which the poor, the ignorant, all, may alike attain—although in various degrees.

In this manhood, the soul is based upon God. There is to be fullness of parts, there is to be completeness, there is to be the right foundation, the right superstructure, the right materials; and they are to be of the right quality; and they are to be in a condition of the highest activity. To this point flow together all the testimonies of Scripture. Everywhere power, fervency—in other words, fullness or efficiency of life—is to be made a part of the Christian character, an aim for the attainment of which men are to strive.

It is not enough that men should be free from every evil; that they should not sin: they should clothe themselves with positive goodness. It is not enough that men should avoid excess. They must seek to attain high states, and to attain them in blessed equilibrium. Languid goodness is not enough. We must be good; but our goodness must be a goodness that sparkles—that is full of both light and heat.

The term *fervent*, in the original, means *burning*, and has its inner meaning as a derivative from the Latin; but in its Greek original it signifies rather the act of heat in boiling. Substantially it there means the same thing that we mean by it, when we speak of that which has been raised to such a degree of light and heat

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that it radiates both of them—sends them out from itself. And this idea runs through the Scripture. We are *children of light.* We are *cleansed by light.* When the forerunner of the Saviour came, it was declared, "He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." And the Saviour himself says, "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?" And men, in consequence, are called to be fervent—that is, like fire—that is, really burning, in an active state of combustion. As all fire that is burning sends out light, so they are to let their light shine. They are to be children of light.

Heat and light are not simply physical qualities. They have been so transformed in our imagination that now they belong to moral and intellectual qualities. Therefore, not simply are we to be avoiders of that which is wrong, not simply are we to be practicers of that which is right, but our life is to be so cast, there is to be such an elevation and intensity in our experience, that we shall be *fervid;* that we shall glow with light and glow with heat. That is unquestionably the Scriptural idea of Christian character. Not perfect, not prophetic character; not that of men set apart for special offices and great occasions; but a character which is attainable by all—that is the inherent idea of life. And one of the evidences of the divinity of the sacred writings is, that such conceptions as these, after long experience and observation and insight, have come to be a part of the regimen of Christian life.

Our mental faculties may exist in a state of passivity; or, just a little above that, in a state of receptivity. They may be in a condition of rest, or partial rest. And then they are sheathed, as it were. But they may be aroused by the presentation of objects or motives of various kinds to what is called a condition of *attention*—a condition in which they stand attent, ready to act or to be acted upon. Higher than that, come what may be called the early stages of *excitement*, in which our faculties begin to work, and work outwardly; in which they begin to glow. Then, higher than this, is a condition in which our faculties reach an intense action; and then they begin to be *luminous.* They produce a sensation of light, and certainly a sensation of heat. They are then in their highest condition. Every man knows this who has been accustomed to perform the duties of life in any routine order. When he first addresses himself to his work, how slow, how hard, how heavy it is. As he goes on, he begins to arouse, and things become more easy, more facile, more natural to him. And, as his enthusiasm grows, the clouds seem to clear away from about his head, and his eyes see better, clearer, sharper, more distinctly. His hands are more dex-

terous when he is in a fit of enthusiasm. This is called a state of inspiration. In other words, when a man passes on to the higher forms of excitement to which our faculties are subject, then he is conscious that he is able to do more in an hour than at other times he is able to do in days or in weeks, and to do it better. The lower down excitement is, the more clumsy are the results of mental activity; but the higher up it is, the finer is the quality of the things accomplished, the more complex they are, and they are more certain as well as briefer.

We can see why, in this higher form of mental activity, *light* and *fire* are chosen as symbols. Are there not persons in my presence who have risen to an excitement in which they seemed to see sparks, as it were, emitted from their own eyes? High excitement produces a sense of objective light, though it is subjective. We ourselves say of ourselves that we *kindle*, that we *glow*, that we have a conscience and experience of being warmed. Our hearts burn within us. And this is not simply borrowed language. It is a language which is suggested by our actual sensation of these higher moods of activity. No man really lives except when he is in these higher moods; that is, he does not compass the real manhood that is in him, he is not conscious of that which is his personal identity, until he rises from the lower forms of passivity, or of excited attention, or of working excitement, into the real higher forms of experience—I might almost say inspirational moods.

This state of high excitement or fervor in a faculty is full of strength. We work when we are indolent with the thumb and finger; but when a man is thoroughly aroused it is the whole hand, and all the power of the arm behind it, and all the power of the body behind that, that works. A man's strength is doubled and quadrupled by simply bringing all the energies of the body to bear upon his work. And as it is in the hand, so it is in the mind. There we work slowly and imperfectly when we work with single faculties; but when all the faculties that are neighbors to each other cooperate, we work with more intensity and efficiency. It is only when a man brings directly or indirectly all the forces of his mind to his work that he has great strength and power. The higher, fervent forms of experience tend to wake up all the faculties. One or more of the faculties of the mind cannot become active without rousing up all the others. If some of them work in earnest, all the others have got to get up and work too.

These higher forms, these intensities of mental life, are favorable to the forming of right conclusions. Men's judgments are

quicker and more accurate when their mind is active in its upper faculties. Many a man finds that the first judgments that he forms after waking in the morning, are his best judgments. The first judgment is not always the best one if it be inspired by the basilar faculties; but if our moral sentiments are awake and active, our first judgments are the best. It is not always so when you go lower down. If a man's pride, or selfishness, or temper, or lust inspire him, his first judgments may be the best for the purposes of these lower passions, but not for any larger scope of reason or right. Then what are called *sober second thoughts* may be better. But when the higher moral faculties are aroused and active, a man's first judgments are surely the best. They are the most generous, the most pure, the most magnanimous; and the effect on them of sober second thoughts is to whittle them down, and fit them to our sordid circumstances in life, because they are too kind and too benevolent for such circumstances. Therefore, where the moral elements are engaged, take the first judgments; but where it is the passional elements, take the second ones. In the latter case they always need to be corrected.

There are various kinds of experiences of truth—physical, intellectual, emotional, sentimental, æsthetic, and moral, and there are experiences of truth which are impossible to any lower stage of excitement. They are never known, and never can be known, except by a mind that is aroused to its intensest action. When a man's mind is so aroused, it touches them. Then they are disclosed to it. There are experiences in a fine nature which occupy but a few moments, but which stand out in the memory as if they had extended through the best part of a whole life. As there are some plants that require the whole summer to blossom in, and some that blossom in one or two weeks' time; so there are some experiences that require a great while in which to blossom, and there are single hours and single moments that are worth more to us than all the rest of our life put together.

Besides, it is only in these high conditions of the mind that the noblest flowers break forth into bloom, and that the richest fruits grow. This is peculiarly characteristic of the higher forms of spiritual truth. What are called *moral intuitions* cannot come except in these most rapturous moods.

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."

This is true in two ways. It is true that we cannot see any more of God than we carry a specimen of, or have experienced, in ourselves. It is also true that the *purity of heart* spoken of here is that which results from the most exalted condition of mind under

excitement, and that when we are in that condition we do see what we could not see at other times. Then we have an intuition of the divine presence and of the royalty of the nature of God.

By this enthusiasm, in an eminent degree, men propagate themselves upon others in matters of taste, of affection, of religion, and of things in general.

Iron cannot be welded at a low temperature. There must be heat, and then you can weld iron to iron. And so you cannot weld natures to each other when they are at a low temperature. Mind cannot take hold of mind, nor faculty hold of faculty, when they are not in a glow; but when they are, they can. When your mind is aroused with enthusiasm, then it is influential upon my mind. And it is scarcely any more a matter of my will whether I shall feel or not. I may not follow your purposes; but I cannot but sympathize. If your feelings are strong, I cannot help sympathizing with you, though I cannot go to the ends that you do. There is no other time when men have such power over their fellowmen as when they are in these higher moods. They are the moods in which one mind dominates another. Love and faith at white heat are irresistible. One reason why the apostles had such power wherever they went, was that, having no fastidious taste or thought about the form or proportion of anything, they had this lunging power, and they were hot all over, all the time; and everywhere men caught fire at their sacred touch.

We see this exemplified in society. Hundreds and hundreds of men, who are rich in learning, ponderous in mental equipment, ample in philosophical power, admirable in proportion, who are at a low degree of temperature, and who labor all their life, achieve but little. And you shall see right by the side of them men who have no comparison with them in native power—certainly not in culture—but who have simplicity, straightforwardness, and above all *intensity*, and who are eminent for their success in accomplishing results. It comes from the fervidness of their spirit. They know in whom they have believed, and in what they have believed; and with one or two simple truths, and with light and fire in the soul, they have gone forward and achieved more, a hundred times, than men who were better equipped.

Out of this fact, which is patent to any one who is observant, much false reasoning has grown. Men say, "What is the use of learning? There is a man who is as learned as an encyclopedia, but who has spent all his life for nothing." It was not his learning that prevented his doing anything, but the fact that his learning was not hot. Again they say, "What is the use of learning? Here

is a poor, ignorant person—so ignorant that he cannot speak his mother-tongue correctly; and he has made his life count at every turn." It was not his ignorance that led to his success. He took his nature, and put it in God's furnace, and raised it to a white heat; and it was the heat that did the work, not his ignorance.

Another man has both amplitude of learning and refinement of culture, and his whole mind is intensely active, and with this equipment he goes forward, and is mighty for achievement. He is a Luther. He is peculiarly and eminently a man. He stands, as Paul stood and stands, powerful in his influence over men. White heat in the brain gives power. And if a man wants to make truth efficacious, let him be fervid. Enthusiasts always get disciples. Even if they be scatter-brained, they win their way. So great is the infectious power of feeling that if it is earnest and continuous, it glows and shines until all about it are permeated by it.

Moreover, these high states of mind throw off a great deal which otherwise oppresses men. Most of us work with what millers call "back-water on the wheel"; as when the wheel is so submerged that the motive power has to overcome the resistance of that which hinders its movement. We do not use half of ourselves, because we are so sodden with care all the time. A great deal of our electricity is used in combating fear. We are full of morbid or malign passions which interrupt our progress. There is that which is worse than back-water on the wheel. It is turbid water, it is mud, often, on the wheel. And we have to use half the force of our life in combating hindrances, so that only half of it remains with which to do the active work.

Now, these higher moods paralyze the basilar faculties, or rather make them auxiliary to the higher faculties. And when men are in these exalted states, it is impossible for them to have care, for the same reason that it is impossible for an eagle to have dust on his wings when he is half way up to the sun. Dust does not go so high. If you be low, if you move along on a level, you become spattered with mud; but if you rise high in the air, the mud cannot touch you. Men that live in higher moods have no such besetments as men who live in their lower moods. If men are only fervent, their very fervency carries them into an atmosphere where there are few hindrances to an ordinary Christian life. Temptation shoots with a strong bow, but with a short arrow; and if you fly on a level the archer will hit you every time, while if you fly high he cannot hit you. Fervency has this to commend it: that while it gives to a man his whole self and power, it also carries him where hindrances and backsets are fewer, if they are not altogether left

behind. A state of exaltation, therefore, is a state of grace. I tell you that those denominations and churches and ministers who believe in revivals, in intensity in religion, go to the root of the matter. There are some objectionable things in religious excitement; but there is also much that is good. And if men say that passion is not religion, my reply is that there is no religion without passion. For, though passion is not religion, religion in its nature is intensive. But the higher feelings are not necessarily boisterous. The most intense feelings are often the stillest. It is when the fire is first kindled that there is the most smoke and crackling, while the bark and softer external parts are being consumed. As the fire comes nearer and nearer to flame, the less there is of smoke. And by and by the coal surpasses the flame. And the heat is greatest when there is the least sparkling and snapping and roaring.

If you must vocalize, vocalize; but there is not a man that shouts "Hallelujah" who feels more than the man that cannot shout because he feels so much. Some manifest what they feel, and some hide what they feel. I do not say which way it should go. It may be that a double action is the right thing. It may be that some feelings should be exhibited, and that some should be concealed. But this I say: that though intense feeling is not religion, yet true religion tends to excite feeling. It does not exhibit itself in a boisterous way, always. It does not necessarily throw out the limbs and give itself bodily expression—though I cannot deny that I have much sympathy for that, in the strong and impulsive natures And if you are to choose between the propriety of a dull, smoldering, unburning experience, and the sparkle, the flame, and the smoke, even, of a glowing one, give me the one that has life in it. Give me the snapping and the sparks, rather than the ashes that never set anything on fire, nor do anything else. Why, if not doing any harm is the only thing to be thought of, as many persons seem to think, if being safe and having no reactions is the chief idea of religion, then the safest thing in the world is a horse that is spavined, and knock-kneed, and broken down, and spare-ribbed, and so feeble that he cannot think of running away, and could not run away if he did think of it. Why, such a horse is just as safe as a post, and no better. Many men are determined to be so safe! Ah, conservatism is such an important thing! Prudence, moderation—these are all-important in their estimation. "Let your moderation be known," say they. Moderation? Why there is no such moderation anywhere on earth as in an ice-house. Things are never disturbed there. All is proper there. There are many persons who

would conserve by congelation. But not so is it in the tropics, where fruits abound, and grow luscious from every bough. Not so does experience dictate. Men who have made their mark in this world have been men that had fire in their souls.

But it is said that the dignity and the sacredness of religion require sobriety and moderation and propriety. Yes, I think that, too. The dignity and sacredness of religion are real. But there is a dignity of Summer as well as a dignity of Winter. There is a dignity of bounty as well as of frugality. There is a dignity of heat as well as of low temperature. Intensity knows how to be dignified while there is fire kindled in every faculty. It is itself sublimely glorious. There is no other dignity like that of life. For dignity does not mean simply something put up in a state of exhibition. It is not an exhibitory quality. Dignity inheres in the thing itself.

Men in worldly matters show what their opinion is in regard to the fervency. If a man is engaged in his own affairs, he calls himself a gentleman, and a man of propriety, although he enters into his work with an intense enthusiasm. He does in secular concerns, without dreaming that there is any harm in it, the same things which he censures in religion. So you shall see men who through the day walk with their face radiant, their eye full of life, their gestures quick; who address themselves in a versatile way to their business; who are successful in their affairs; who are lively and genial in their social intercourse, so that everybody likes them; and who, when they go to their religious meetings in the evenings, are dull of eye, stupid of tongue, and proper of body, everything having gone to sleep in them, because religion is such an *awful* thing. And that is what they call *an offering to God.* Their secular life is earnest and real, and in that they glow, and are on fire, and they take the fruit of it; but when it comes to their religious life, they talk about *dignity*, and *moderation*, and *propriety*. It is a sham! It is false in philosophy, false in grace, and false in experience.

Irregular, imperfect, one-sided excitement is to be criticised in religion; but it is no argument against religion to say that there is excitement in it.

But it is said, "Is it not bad taste? Does it not lead to a thousand grotesque experiences?"

If one will only walk once or twice through the geometric gardens of Europe, he will see what men understood by fine taste. There he will see one tree shaped like a dove, another like a pyramid, and others like gate-posts. He will see long rows of trees shaped just alike, and forming arches as far as the eye can reach. And he

will see canals, with appropriate water-falls, where every drop goes over marble just so, and every stone is polished and decorous. Gentlemanly waterfalls they are. Everything is very fine; everything is after a given pattern; and the pattern is for the most part geometric. And that is what is called *taste* and *dignity*. And a person who has been trained in that idea of taste, on going into our native forests, would be shocked to see those brown leaves in yonder heap that my feet delight to tread upon, and that are full of suggestions and music. There are bugs on the trees, as sure as I live! And there are birds singing in the branches. In Paris, birds are kept in aviaries, and in wire cages, and are taught to sing properly. But these birds of the forest are uncultured, and fly hither and thither at will. And here is a tree that lops over a brook, and looks as though it were going to fall. And this foreign-bred gentleman, seeing it, would say, "If I had that tree I would make it stand up. Trees were never made to be crooked." Here is a stream that runs and winds as it pleases, observing no rules of exactitude or regularity, and his sense of propriety is offended. Here are all these objects of interest, following the directions which are natural to them, full of instruction and inspiration, and this man despises them, and says, "They are not in good taste."

There are many who do not like that great Park in New York, because it is attempted to reproduce nature. They want those long French lines of level walks, and those glittering tinsel arrangements which are for show, for show, for show. It is the glory of our grounds, that we have introduced into them what is called "natural landscape gardening;" that we are attempting to follow nature, and not to conform to the absurdities of an artificial and corrupted taste.

Now, there is nothing in this world that is so truly the magister or legislator of taste, nothing that is so a position to give canons of criticism and to receive none, in matters of taste, as the noblest feelings in the highest form of their excitement.

When a mother has been long separated from her child, and given it up for dead, and it is brought back in an unexpected hour, and with wild outcry she throws out her arms, and rushes to the child, as the wind rushes, is her attitude, and are her tones and gestures, to be subjected to the rules of a French dancing-master? Is he to stand and say, "You must think of your posture, madam"? I tell you, a mother in the paroxysm of love looks splendidly, I do not care how she looks. The grandeur of feeling overrules all criticism; and critics are to take their lessons and their measures from feeling, and not attempt to criticise according to their own laws.

Let a man's soul be weighed down by a sense of his infirmity and sinfulness, and he cannot express himself in bad taste, however he expresses himself. It is not the expression that I am thinking of; it is the feeling that I see; and that is always grand. Let a man, like the martyr of old, be pelted with stones, and let his speech be interrupted and rendered grotesque by the blows which he receives; let his soul have a vision of God, and let him say, "I see Jesus at the right hand of the Father," and there is no longer any grotesqueness about his speech. You cannot have grotesqueness in a thing that is itself superior to any possible law of criticism. And so, although the lower forms of emotion may be criticised; yet, there is nothing so far above cavil as the expression of genuine moral emotion in its highest form of excitement. Excitement is indispensable to the highest Christian experiences; and the expression of these is perfectly reconcilable to the utmost refinement.

There has been much criticism of the forms of words employed for the expression of religious thought. Look at the objections which are made to our hymn-writers. Nearly half of our best hymns were thrown out because they were so amorous. The hymns of Wesley and Watts, in which they speak of clasping God, or of being clasped in his bosom, were condemned as too full of love emotion. And they were set aside for a long time. But we are now getting back to them. And it is coming to be understood that the full and glorious expression of real feeling in its highest state is the best expression, and that those are the best hymns which follow such expression. And a noble and generous nature cannot but despise such criticism as would lead us to reject such hymns.

We ought not to despise taste and order and regularity; but you cannot have the free expression of high feeling within the bounds of order and regularity. If you must give up either order and regularity or high feeling, I say, Give up the order and regularity.

Go to the plantation, and see those poor children of darkness (dark both ways, outside and in) gathered together, and singing hymns which are a mixture of heathen mythology and Scripture; see them spring into the air with wild outcry and fantastic gestures. There are a thousand things to be pruned and corrected in their mode of worshiping; but I think there is something worse than their rude manifestations.

Go, now, with me into that stately room where there are thirty or forty or fifty people. Each one picks out a whole seat, and sits down on it. And each one is perfectly proper. Nobody speaks to anybody. And when the choir sing, three or four of the congrega-

tion manage to get up and join in the singing. And one gets up to speak, and says just what he said thirty or forty years ago, and what he has repeated about once a week ever since. And when he takes his seat another gets up and goes through a stereotyped speech. And when he is done another gets up, and perhaps reproves them both. And when he sits down one or two prayers are uttered —prayers that have been committed to memory, and that are repeated for the five hundred thousandth time! And that is called *a meeting.* There has been no indecorum, no impropriety, not a single exceptional thing, except this, that they were a set of corpses making believe that they were alive. They were dead, every one of them. Every one was really insincere and hypocritical. It was a fantastic and grotesque scene. And I say that the wildest dance of ex-slaves in the woods is better than such a meeting conducted by beings that call themselves men, but that in reality are a set of galvanized corpses. Life is the first element of everything that is proper or in good taste.

But it is said, "Does it not lead to fanaticism and rashness?" Yes, but I do not think that these are so bad as some other things. Fanaticism is not the vice of all temperaments. It is peculiar to those who are over-cerebrated—who have too much brain. Some of you may have to watch against the evils arising from too much brain, but not all! It is true that feeling may be carried to excess, and that it may lead men wrong; but the want of feeling is carried to excess a thousand times where too much feeling is once.

As all good soils naturally run to weeds, so all rich natures naturally run to faults. It has sometimes been said that we cannot help loving men because they are full of faults; and there is more in that than we may at first suppose. Activity with mistakes is better than inactivity without mistakes. Life with the steam hissing all the time is better than death under any circumstances. Life carries with it the liability to error; and so men that are alive are continually at fault. If the water in a bucket is shallow enough, it will never spill over, but if it is full to the brim it will spill over many times—for an even bucket of water never spilled over one side that it did not spill over the other side also.

It is true that intense excitement in religion sometimes leads to rashness and fanaticism, as very rich soil, besides producing the crop, tends to produce an immense harvest of weeds; but would you say to the farmer, "Barrenness is the best cure for weeds; do not raise anything, and then you will never have any weeds?" I would say, "Run your cultivator between the rows, and cut down the weeds, and let your crops grow. The fact that the weeds want to

grow is a hint of what a soil there is. And the farmer rejoices in it.

And so, faults of over-expression and intensity are more frequently the results of mis-direction and adverse influences, than of too much feeling. There are a thousand things in life that are mischievous which would not be if they had room to expand. There are men who make trouble in churches because they are not allowed to express themselves freely. Let a man spread himself, and relieve his mind, and he will settle down and become a manageable and efficient worker; whereas, if you hedge him up, and attempt to repress the manifestation of his feeling, by and by, in spite of the deacon on this side, and the deacon on that side, and the minister in front, he will gather force, and burst out somewhere. Let a man give loose to his expression. You can bear it, and he will be relieved.

It is said that in the politics of our country, the everlasting speech-making and writing with which we are afflicted, are a vice. They may be a vice; but they are a protection against revolution. They are our safety-valves. We let off our steam in regard to the constitution and the laws, and then there is no danger. When a man has said and written all he wants to, he feels better. He is more comfortable when he finds that his liberty is not restrained.

And so, in the conduct of churches and social gatherings, the liberty of speaking where there is deep and strong feeling, is indispensable to the health of feeling.

But it is said, "Will it not exhaust men to be in such an exalted state all the time. Do you pretend to say that it is possible for us to live in these conditions of intense excitement at all times? No. I do intend to say, however, that nerve-force is medicinal and nourishing. I think that *nerve* means *doctor*, in the best and highest sense of the term; and that what doctors have the credit of doing is generally done by nerve-force. Nerve-force is, as far as we can see it, life-force, among men. There is nothing safer than for men to have an abundance of sweet nerve-force acting in them and through them. And it is not dangerous even when it is in continuous activity. Excitement, if it spring from our higher nature, is joy-inspiring and health-giving. Excitement that springs from the malign passions is corrosive, and cannot be long endured; but that which comes from joy in the Holy Ghost, from faith, from hope, and from love, not only is not exhausting, but is the only thing that can be endured for any considerable length of time. Men can go on that forty days, whether in the wilderness or in the city. A man can live longer on that than on anything else.

Indolence rusts; but high excitement keeps health and strength, and renews them when they are diminished. A man rusts out more by inactivity in a year than he wears out by wholesome excitement in a whole life-time. There are far more chances that a truly active man will live a large number of years, than that a laggard, dull man will. Excitement, where it is on the right side of the mind—where it is toward God—is to be encouraged and sought for.

These things being so, there are special reasons why we should live in these higher conditions of emotion. The importance of the things which we are seeking as Christians—the importance of our characters, of our manhood, and of our destiny—impresses itself in such a way upon one, that he cannot but magnify that which will the most certainly lead to these results. And intensity of feeling is one of the most efficacious means to these ends.

I do not blame men who seek money, knowing how powerful it is as a means for the accomplishment of a multitude of worthy objects. I do not blame a man for seeking money when he thinks how many ways there are in which, by its use, he can minister to the comfort and happiness of his wife and children. I do not blame a man for seeking money when he sees how many interests it may be made to control, and how it may be made an instrument for gratifying taste and promoting culture. I do not blame men who by industry and enterprise seek influence and power. These have their relative importance. I do not blame men who go to the North Pole seeking their fortune, or who go to the tropics for the sake of laying a foundation for their old age. But oh! if a man is justified in seeking these lower things with such intensity, with an industry and zeal almost supreme, how much more should a man seek with burning enthusiasm and indomitable earnestness that which, after all, is more important to him than silver, or gold, or reputation, or place, or anything else! A man's sum of enjoyment depends upon what he has in himself.

"A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

If a man's heart is not right, he may be as rich as Crœsus and not be happy. It requires something besides money, desirable as it is, valuable as it is, and profitable as is the honorable pursuit of it, to make a man happy. And if we justify a man's zeal and enterprise and industry, and do not blame him for compassing sea and land, netting the one and harrying the other, for the sake of gaining earthly treasures, ought we not at least to manifest as much industry and enterprise and zeal in seeking after the imperishable treasures of God's kingdom—a higher honor, a purer conscience, a serener

faith, and a hope that penetrates into the invisible world? Ought we not to feel as much enthusiastic emotion about these as about the baser things which nourish the body?

Consider, too, the sense which they who earnestly seek these better riches have of the providence of God, and of the all-surrounding love of God, and of the ministration of God's angels around about us. We do not wonder when we see happy families bound together. There are households which seem like an organ, every member of which seems like a separate stop, and all the members of which, together, are choral, playing to each other, and with each other, and into each other; and if we look with approval upon the nameless intimacies, the thousand attachments, the many happy unions which we see formed in life; if we are not shocked at the connections and inter-connections of hearts that are on fire with affection toward each other—those of husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters, or friends; if when these things come to our notice our souls are filled with joy, shall we not rejoice when we behold higher fruits of manhood than these? Shall a man love his imperfect fellow-man, his equal, or one that is less than his equal; and shall we not experience a fervor of love when surrounded with the affluence and exceeding riches of the divine love, that fills the heaven, and overpours and fills the earth—a love that with its sacred touch inflames the heart, and fills the household, and spreads itself in many glinting forms through life? When we have bestowed upon us the fountain and glory of the divine love, shall we be content with torpid feeling? Shall we not glow? Shall our emotions not be permitted to mount up into serene heights—into that love of God in Christ Jesus which passes knowledge? Shall we delight to see men rejoice in each other's love, and say, "I do not blame them for the wildest exhibitions of joy;" and shall we not rejoice in the love of God with a joy that knows no bounds?

A distant relative of a man who has been poor all his life has died and left him all his property, so that he now has an income of fifty thousand dollars. And all men congratulate him on his good fortune. And when he says, in an ecstasy of gladness, "I will send for my old father and mother, and make them comfortable, and my sisters shall have the education which they have so long coveted, and I will help my brother who is struggling for a livelihood," we do not blame him for expressing the happiness which he feels.

But we have an eternal inheritance that is untaxed; we have a wealth that never can be diminished; and shall we not mount up in ecstasy, in contemplation of it? Is a man at liberty to be enthusiastic when he greets his friends with manifestations of love, and to

rejoice when he sees the demonstrations of love in the household, and between man and man; and shall he be conscious that there is a brooding divine love, and be criticised because he has enthusiastic and upmounting feelings? No. If any persons in this world have a right to enthusiasm and intensity of emotion, it is Christians. If any persons are to serve with unexampled zeal and overflowing joy, it is those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, and who by the love of God have been made heirs of salvation.

Bring your best faculties, in their best state, in their highest condition, in their fullest equipment; for God is worthy of them all, and heaven and immortality are worthy of them all.

Christian brethren, do not be afraid of feeling. Be afraid of bad feelings; but let right feelings flame and spread. Let your light so shine, and your warmth so radiate, that men seeing and feeling them may glorify your Father which is in heaven.

And now, my brethren, we will for the last time this Summer stop together and give expression to our feelings, and rejoice in the fellowship and sympathy which we have with our blessed Saviour, as we partake of the symbols of his body which was broken for us, and of his blood which was shed for us. All you who belong to this church are, of course, without invitation, at liberty to remain. All who belong to any Christian church on God's earth are affectionately invited to stay. All those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth, whether they belong to any church or not, are invited to tarry. Everybody who has that in his heart which calls out for Jesus; everybody who in his own judgment says, "I need help, and I accept Christ, and I desire to make an offering of love to him,—" I invite to partake with us of the Lord's Supper. If there is a struggling soul here who thinks it will help him in the way of duty, and make his burden lighter, to take these emblems, let him take them; and if he has not joined the church, and he thinks he ought to join it, let him join it afterwards. Christ first, and then the church. If you are a child of Christ, and if you lift the feeblest hands toward him, or have the least aspiration in that direction, for his sake sit down, dear brother, dear sister, and strengthen yourselves by these memorials, which were meant to be food for your body and life for your soul.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

Accept our thanks, O heavenly Father, that that which reason could not do, nor experience find out, thou hast done for us with infinite condescension, opening a way by which we should know that there is a God, and that his name is Love. Thou art the Father in heaven, and on earth, and in all the universe. Thou dost love those whom thou hast created, and all that thou art governing. Thy very severities are the strength by which thou dost divide between the good and the evil. The stripes and the punishments which thou dost inflict, are not sprung from hatred. Thou dost not love suffering. It is love that corrects. Like as a father pitieth his children, so thou dost pity us. Thou knowest our frame, that we are dust. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. We rejoice that punishment is not demoniac but divine, that thou art ruling everywhere with force where things need force, and with reason where things need reason, and with affection where things need affection, and are susceptible of it. But everywhere, by force and by reason and by affection, thou art governing for infinite good; and thou rejoicest in it, and wilt rejoice to the very end. And we rejoice that we may come into sympathy with thee by becoming like unto thee. May we understand that we cannot know our God except as we are like him. Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God. May we have such purity in every faculty that we may be able to discern our Head—ours in infinite and glorified form—and rejoice in God, and be swallowed up in him.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant unto us, now, in thy presence, such gracious manifestations of thyself that we may not seem to ourselves strangers nor foreigners. May this be to us our Father's house. May this day be a day of blessing to us. Be thou here to administer thine own gifts. And grant that every one may feel that he is searched out and known. For thou dost know every one of us by name, and by occupation, and by place; and all our history. We rejoice, O Lord, that thou hast made this manifest.

And we pray that we may have, to-day, a sense of thy personal interest in each one of us. Bless those that need the consoling influences of thy Spirit. May the Comforter be their companion; and may the joy of thy salvation chase away their griefs; or may they be able to bear them.

We pray that thou wilt teach those that mourn how to mingle gladness with mourning. Teach those in trouble how out of trouble there may come the purifying flame as well as the smoke.

We pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt grant that those who are weak, and who are discouraged, and who are ready to perish, may straighten up, and feel that God is their strength—God in the heaven, and God on the earth—the God that watches the sparrow, and that counts the very hairs of their head. May they feel that they have a right to come to him in every time of trouble. May they gird up their loins, and cast away the cowardice of fear and despondency, and walk valiantly to the end of life—till thou shalt call them home.

Let any who are perplexed as to the way of duty find the light shining upon their path. May they see plainly the course which they ought to pursue. And help them by discipline to discern things right or wrong. Help them more and more perfectly to be able to interpret for themselves what is right and what is duty day by day.

Grant thou that all the memories of the past may be sanctified to every one. How many there are whose thoughts are withdrawn from the future, and borne back into the captivity of the past! How many there are who

* Immediately following the reception of members into the Church.

seem to themselves as though they had been carried away by the flood! How many there are whose hopes are disheveled! How many there are who are without motive, and almost without a wish to live! How many there are who mourn in the secret places of the past! How many there are who see their hopes and expectations blighted! Look out upon them, O Lord, we beseech of thee, and rebuke them and bring them out of the wilderness of their own imagination. Make them feel that they are, in life, not to take care of themselves, and not to move round and round a centre of their own experience, as if the end of living was to please themselves. May they look forth as thou dost, and see the world that groans and travails in pain until now. How many there are that need instruction! How many that need comforting! How many little ones need rearing! How much there is to be done! and how hard it is to do it! And oh, that we might be filled with a better enterprise. Oh, that we might be borne away from our selfish longings and desires, and from mourning over unrealized hopes, into a more glorious sphere of activity.

And we pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt make us patient. If we are to be pillars in the house of our God, may we know how to bear burdens. If we are to be soldiers of our Master, may we know how to take hardness.

We pray that we may have all tenderness shown us in things pure and sacred, but that all tenderness may be taken away from us which leads to self-indulgence and to cowardice. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt help us more and more to preach Christ, not only with the lip, but with the eye, with the hand, with the things which we help others to do, and with the things which we do ourselves. May we be as lights to those that are around about us. May they look to us for gentleness and tenderness. And in practicing them toward those in our midst, may we enlarge our conception, and see that it is the pattern in small measure of that glorified whole which thou art in heaven, Lord Jesus, giving thyself as a perpetual offering, forever, living for others and finding therein thine own joy and satisfaction.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that thy servants who, this morning, have been joined to this household of faith, may not only be joined outwardly and historically to us, but may have a life in Christ, with the same hopes, and joys, and sorrows, and activities and sympathies which all his true disciples have.

We pray for any that have wandered into strange faiths. We beseech of thee that thou wilt restrain them and bring them back to the way of rectitude. And may those that have gone wrong, not be discouraged. Although they have stumbled, may they rise up and go forward again.

And wilt thou strengthen the weak knees and the feeble hands. May those who have not the power to sustain themselves, be sustained by thy strength. May none attempt to rely wholly upon their own might. May they take thee as their staff, and in the mountainous way may they lean upon thee; and in the dark valley may they still find strength and support in thee.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the young. The little children—will the Lord love them, and teach us to love them more and more. And in the various spheres of life in which they move, may we deal gently and tenderly with them. And may we sow in them the seeds of honor, and truth, and purity and duty.

Bless, O Lord, those who are going out of childhood, and are taking hold of the world with all its strange fascinations and delusions. We beseech of thee, grant that they may live for that which is true, and right and just among men; for that which is lovely; for that which is divine. And may they join to their thoughts, even thus early, a wide expanse of the future, that they may not seem to themselves simply creatures between the cradle

and the grave, but may think of immortality, even now, when they are beginning their life; and rejoice in their infinite, outstretched life.

And we pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt bless those on whom rest the burden and heat of the day. May they never be weary in well-doing. May they not be tempted to say, "I have done my part." May they not take their measure of what they are to do from the measure of what they have done. May they take their measure from their own strength and power, not thinking nor feeling that they have done enough, so long as there is more that they can accomplish.

And, O Lord, bless the aged who are among us. As they are prepared to lay aside the leaves of summer, and in autumn stand waiting for winter, may they glow with autumnal colors. May the glory of the Lord rest upon them. May their most joyful and serene and beautiful days be the days in which they are waiting for the coming of the Son of man.

We pray that thou wilt bless all wanderers from us—all that are upon the sea; all that are in distant lands; all that are far away separated from us by distance and occupation; and all that are still further separated by dissipations and vices and crimes. O Lord our God, remember the absent, and bless them.

And grant, we pray thee, that in our varied lives, all roads may lead to the heavenly gate, and that the households of the Church may be gathered as a great household of faith at last, where former things shall have past away, and where pain and crying shall be known no more forever.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

A SAFE GUIDE FOR YOUNG MEN.

"And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God. And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."—GENESIS XXVIII., 20–22.

You are familiar with this history. It is the history of a very early day; and yet, by many important threads it is connected intimately with the history of modern times. It is the same human nature as ours, though under different circumstances.

Jacob was not permitted to form a marriage connection with the daughters of the land in which he was sojourning. He would bring into his household idolatrous tendencies. So he was sent back to the parent stock. Journeys then were very different from journeys now, even in that land. From the extreme south of Palestine, he had to thread his way amidst multiplied difficulties. Alone, unattended, on foot, with such provision as he could gather, he wandered to the extreme north, and far beyond, and to the east, the land of his fathers, the precise location of which is much in dispute. And it was on his way there that, lying down to sleep, and propping himself up with nothing softer than a heap of stones, he had a vision and a promise of God made to him. Then it was that, on awaking, he was profoundly impressed with a sense of the divine presence, and all his life was opened up to him. Then he made this vow and covenant with his God: If God would go with him, and prosper him; if he would preserve him from danger, and minister to him the necessary substance of life, then on his part he would take the Lord for his God. And he also made a vow of benevolence: that he would be unselfish, and would devote a tenth part of his substance to the works of goodness—that is, to God.

There is something especial, to my mind, in a part of this promise:

"If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God."

SUNDAY EVENING, March 12, 1871. LESSON: PSA. LXXIII. 1-26. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 898, 878, 353.

Some have thought that it was one of the many gods that then were moving round the world, and trying to get worshipers; and that Jacob promised, if he would bestow his patronage on him, he would make him his God, and become one of his votaries.

I look upon it very differently? What had he to offer? What was there that could be an offering to God? There was but one thing, and that was his own affections. It was a filial offering. "In requital of this goodness to me, thou shalt be my God. I will love thee. I will obey thee. I will serve thee." A man has no higher offer to God than that of his affections. And there is none that is more esteemed.

Now, every young man who leaves his father's house, and comes down to great cities like these, may be said to be in many respects making such a journey as the patriarch made; not, to be sure, going to seek a wife among the father's former kinspeople, but going to seek, substantially, the establishment of his household and his fortune. He leaves his father's house, and goes out into the great wilderness of the world, and encounters a thousand more dangers than ever the patriarch did, more insidious, more powerful, more easily seducing; and there is no young man that can afford to go out and begin a life in these great cities, where beat upon him every one of the passions of the human heart, and the fiercest temptations. No man can afford to go out into life and begin for himself without making a covenant with God. And I do not know of any covenant that could be more simple, more rational, or more proper in every way, than this one that the old patriarch Jacob made.

"If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God."

Among the visions that the young indulge in, I think there is none more beautiful, none that springs from a nobler impulse, than this, that if it please God to give them prosperity there shall come a time when they will go back to their father's house, and, instead of the rude farm-house in which he dwelt, build him a far more convenient one; and that say of the dear old mother whose face is covered with toil-marks, having given herself night and day, and stinted herself, that she might have the means of putting forward her children, "She shall not work forever so." Many a man has the reputation of being avaricious and addicted to business; of working night and day to hoard; but there is at the bottom a root of filial love; and he says, "The day shall come in which the old people shall not be slaves. I will redeem them from this bondage, and will make them happy." And it is a very generous feeling, and a very noble one.

There are a great many who, perhaps, feel that they shall return yet, one day, to the place from which they started. If our youth is happy I think we never forget our early associations, and no place afterward seems so congenial to us as that where we spent our boyhood days. How beautiful the plainest scenery, how bewitching the most common-place things, which are woven into the memory of one's childhood home! How do men that traverse their own land, and circumnavigate the globe, come back to describe some little plain place, some small village, almost without attractions, as the most charming place they have ever seen! Ah! they carry in their eyes and hearts the things that make it beautiful. Thus the memories of childhood are sweet, precious, beautiful, and generous.

The impulse with many young men whose parents are already prosperous, so that the necessity does not exist of lifting them out of poverty, is, perhaps, that they will go back and settle down at the old home after they have made themselves a substantial fortune by their own fidelity and enterprise.

But between the purpose and the performing is a region far longer, morally speaking, than that between Beer-sheba and Paden Aram. And between the starting from one's father's house, and the coming back to it again, there are more dangers crowded, often, than were ever crowded into the journey and experience of Jacob.

Now, although I have preached a great many sermons to the young, I do not think I have preached one too many. Because temptations are like tides that come in continuous periods, alternations; and sermons ought to come as often, if not oftener, than these alternations. They ought to keep filling up, filling up, filling up the intervals that otherwise would be liable to be filled with evil influences.

Many of you have no father in New York or Brooklyn. There is no one here that thinks for you, or cares particularly about you, so far as your better nature is concerned. There are many that would tamper with you, and lower the tone of your conscience. There are many that would make the way of wrong easier for you. Some of you are so fortunate as to have friends that hold you up. Perhaps many of you have the felicity of being surrounded by wholesome household influences. But many hundreds come to this church, either regularly or from time to time, who have no person in the world near them that thinks for them, prays for them, and talks plainly to them. Therefore I feel in some sense as though, now, my years and my relations to you justify my taking the place to you of father, and giving you repeated counsels, bearing upon the ordinary procedure of your life. And this is what I propose to do to-night.

I desire that every one who has come down to this great mart, where so much is won and so much is lost, this vast workshop, where so much is made of good and of evil, these terrible shambles, where so many souls and bodies are slaughtered, should remember how much their success here depends upon a few simple, commonplace moralities. I desire to reiterate, as I have often and often asseverated, how much your prosperity depends upon your industry, your frugality, your self-restraint in all things, your truthfulness, your honesty, your fidelity. And I the more emphasize this now because the contrary impression is always prevalent, for very simple reasons which I will mention in a moment.

You are particularly liable to be misled, just now, by the idea that there are many brilliant chances of fortune in coming down to a city like this. Setting aside the ordinary courses, the ordinary motives, and the ordinary instruments of productive industry, young men come to New York thinking of it as a great gold mine. As one who has read in the Arabian Nights of the man that fell down a precipice and found himself in a field covered with diamonds which he could have for the picking up; so young men come to New York almost thinking it is a place where they will have only to fill their pockets and be rich. They come with the most exaggerated ideas of the wealth-producing power of these great cities.

Now, they are greatly mistaken. You take as large a population as that of New York, averaging it through the country, and you will find the law of productive industry to be the same in both city and country. You are concentrated here. Here you are peculiarly situated. But according to the law of political economy the chances of success are the same. Luck, or chance, which is the basis of the fool's philosophy, has no more to do with permanent prosperity in these cities than anywhere else. There are sudden upliftings of prosperity, and there are just as sudden collapses. There are brilliant adventurers here, who have for a time an apparent and specious prosperity; but so it is everywhere. And success in life here, or where you were born and brought up, depends substantially upon morality, industry, frugality, foresight, sagacity, perseverance in well-doing—that is, in working upon fidelity and honor. Truth and honesty are the great staple elements which, if a man has them and employs them, will certainly give him prosperity, though they may not give him wealth, nor lift him to places of honor or trust. Those are things which are to be determined much by a man's natural forces. Now and then incidental forces may come in, but in the main, judging by great averages, men find about the places which they are fitted for, and reap and gain about that which they

are qualified to reap and gain. And productive forces are employed best by those who have the simple, sterling, substantial moralities of life. Lying and cheating and swindling are no more prosperous in New York than in Canandaigua, or in Mount Vernon, or in the smallest village in the land. They are prosperous nowhere. They are the devil's delusions that mislead men. For there can be no permanent prosperity except that which is built upon the broadest grounds of common morality.

Wealth is to be gained by paying for it, in thought, in industry, or in some other way, so that you shall have given a fair equivalent for it. The wealth which you collect, you must earn. This is a principle which men cannot long evade. The sphere in which you work here is larger than that in which you worked in the country; but it is a sphere which is governed by precisely the same laws. The climate in cities is not essentially different from that in the country. There are the same seasons here. There are the same Summer and Winter. There are the same light and heat. There is the same electricity. Nature is the same, and so are the great elements of morality, and the great elements of political economy; the vague notion that wealth comes by some lucky stroke, some brilliant essay, some fortunate alliance, or some short cut which other men have not discovered, is quite as false here as there. Men will fly much sooner than they will become prosperous by any such scheme as this.

Hundreds and thousands have come down here despising the simple moralities on which they have been brought up; despising the productive forces patiently and continuously applied; despising small profits honestly made and surely held; despising simplicity and unostentatious gain. To make a show is one of the insanities of approbativeness. It is one of the disclosures of vanity, of the overweening sense of a man's own capacity, of a sort of delirious joy and expectation of success, and of the exhibitory effects of success in after life.

I therefore beseech you not to set aside all those great laws which have been proved generation after generation, age after age, and which are still exemplified in our midst. Especially do not be led astray by any appearance. If wicked men prosper, do not give up your belief that morality is safer than wickedness. If men who are absolutely rotten shine by the phosphorescence of decay, and dazzle your eyes, remember that in doctrine their feet shall slide. I am just as sure that ill-gotten gains will destroy the getter, and that immorality inflated into prosperity will by and by collapse like an overblown bladder, as I am of my existence. You had better read the seventh Psalm once a week nowadays, when glittering, corrupt and

corrupting men seem to be carrying off the honors and emoluments of life—those of you, especially, who are asking yourselves whether it is worth your while to wash your hands in innocency and self-denial. In God's due time, when his great wheel comes round, multitudes of men who have disregarded his laws will be destroyed.

Surely, the universe is conducted upon principles of God which make truth, and honor, and industry, and integrity more profitable than fraud and deceit and malignity can be. The manhood that is in man is safer to be trusted than the animalhood that is in man. And if, here and there, there are some glorified swine that root for jewels and gold, and wear them in their snouts, do not you become a hog that you may be prospered like them. Manhood yet, against swinehood. For, remember that however a man may seem to prosper by violating the laws of morality and purity, he forfeits confidence, respect, sympathy, all that which holds a man up and rewards him when he stands in the esteem and love of his fellow-men in the community. Although for a time he may sustain himself, the time comes for him to fall and be dashed to pieces. Sooner could you gather up the fragments of a glass goblet that had fallen from a high point upon a stone pavement, than you could put a corrupt man on his feet again when he had once gone down. And you that now envy him, and for the sake of favor would servilely follow him, will be among the men that will hiss at him, and say, "I knew it would be so. I always despised him."

Let me beg of you who have left your home, and come down to this great city to make your fortune, not to forget the plain living of your father's house. You were brought up frugally. You did not use to wear very fine clothes. You were accustomed to dress very substantially; but farmers' boys do not generally wear broadcloth when they are working on the farm. And there are young men here who would not have to reach their hand out far to get hold of the old coarse suits—their brown tow clothes for Summer, and their substantial homespun woolen clothes for Winter.

When such young men come down to New York, people seem to them, I suppose, as butterflies do when they come out of the chrysalis, and open up their fine wings, and begin their Summer's cruise. Young men, when they come here, feel that they must be re-born into respectability and gentility; and their idea of gentility is to have fine clothes, and a little money in the pocket, and to play gentleman. Under such circumstances men go down very soon. They lose the simplicity of their tongue. They eat strange viands, which have strange ways with them; and they drink strange drinks which they have not learned to mix at their father's board. Honest, simple-

minded, plain, excellent people were your parents; and you lived temperately and moderately at home; but you want to shine out here; and you become dishonest in order to do it. Some can afford to dress as people in the city dress; but are you of them?

You came down here almost with nothing. Your father was unable to do more than pay your traveling expenses. And you have only slender earnings. You receive only a boy's or young man's salary. It is only just enough to keep you from year's end to year's end, provided you are extremely frugal and economical.

Now, there are two courses, either of which you can take. One is to say, "I am not living nor dressing so well as my companions, and I must have fine clothes and better fare." The other is to say, with stern manliness, "I have come down here to make my way; and honesty and simplicity require that I should not live any higher than I myself can earn the means of living. I will be no man's pauper or beneficiary. I will make what I take; and what I make and take shall support me." The discipline which you get from this latter course of self-denial is better than going to college. Many a man cradled in learning gets no discipline; but a young man who, having been reared and trained in self-indulgence, leaves his father's house, and comes to the city, and says, "I will be beholden to no man; I can afford to live as plain as any man, both in regard to diet and clothes, if it is necessary to my manhood, and I will not have anything which I cannot fairly earn; I will be independent and establish myself,"—such a young man gets a discipline which is worth a university education. By forming that purpose and adhering to it he is educating himself in the very elements of manhood. He is making a *man* of himself.

Do you suppose men think less of you because you dress plainly? Fools may, but men do not. Do you think your chances in life are less because you feel ashamed to show a man where your room is, and where you sleep? Why, many a man has slept in a barn who was better than many another who slept in mansions and palaces. A man ought not to be ashamed to say, "I am poor, and I cannot do so and so." It is the curse of America; since there are no orders of nobility here, men are ashamed to admit that they are poor. The young man defends himself, and says, "I am not so poor as you take me to be." Even sensible people yield to the temptation of the devil, and are ashamed to acknowledge that they work.

I suppose there are persons in this congregation who keep but a single servant, and do half their work themselves, and who, if you go to see them, will talk as if they did not need to work, but did it because they chose to. They are willing to have you think that they

work from choice; but they would not for anything have you understand that they have to work; that they cannot get along without it. It takes a great deal of common sense to enable a person who moves in genteel society to say, without blushing, "I have to do my own work."

People are a great deal more sensible in Europe than in America in such matters. A man of moderate means there says, "I must travel frugally. I cannot order expensive things. I am not able to do it." There is an honor in living within one's means; and a man who is truly bred will do it.

Young men are ashamed to have it understood that they wear a silver watch because they cannot afford to wear a gold one. It is thought a young man who cannot have a gold watch in this country cannot be much. And when they have got a gold watch, they must have a gold chain. And when they have got a gold chain, they must have something dangling at the end of it. And these things become necessities. The young man wants them, he thinks about them, he dreams of them. Other young men have them, and why should not he? There is a man, his rival, who is no better looking than he, and who has no better education than he; but oh, that vest and that jewelry! They nearly kill him with envy. He cannot afford to go without these these things because his young companions have excited his vanity, and corrupted his simplicity, and gone far toward undermining his manhood. He is unwilling to live plainly, and more than plainly, as his circumstances dictate that he should at the beginning of life.

There are men that stand high in wealth and prosperity, and will to the end of life, who know well that when they came to New York they lived in a way that it would pain them to see one of their sons live. And yet, it was the making of them.

If young men live plainly and simply, it is but for a time. And if they can afford it one year, they can afford it two years, if necessary. And if they can afford it two years, they can afford it four. A man can afford to live plainly until he is able, by his own industry, to live better. Do not walk before you creep. Do not run before you walk. Be willing to live low, and if necessary lower than the working-man. Your manhood should be more to you than your clothes or your food.

Let me beseech of you not to throw off hastily your old household affections. Keep home bright in your heart and in your memory. You have had better opportunities than your sister, or than your younger brother. They toil on, one in the kitchen or the dairy, and the other on the farm or in the shop. You have blossomed out

into a young merchant. And if you have a manly spirit in you, you will never, for one single moment, forget that they are your kin, and dear to you. You will glory in them and over them. You will also remember the sun-browned father and the wrinkled mother. They will be everything to you. No pictorial beauty, and no fanciful belle will be to you what father and mother, and brother and sister are.

When I was in college a young man came there who was in a state of abject and utter poverty. He was determined to have an education. He sawed wood for a livelihood. For more than a year he slept on the floor in his room, wrapping himself up in a blanket. He boarded himself; and his food consisted mostly of Indian meal pudding and molasses. He worked in vacation and term-time to earn a scanty pittance by which to educate himself. When he had finished his course in college, the first thing he did was to put his brother next younger than he through an academy. Then the two together took hold of hands and brought up a sister. She was educated, and has moved very high in influence, though not in fashion, since that time. And the three have had as much brain-power on the age in which we live as any three persons that you could select. And as for me, I could forgive ten thousand infelicities in consideration of such hearty home-love and genuine feeling of brotherhood.

And now that you have broken off from your homes, do not feel that you are better than those that you have left behind. Let your heart never forget your homestead, nor the old people, nor the young people.

About the most despicable thing that I can recollect was this: A young lawyer in a former parish of mine had risen to a conspicuous position. One day I heard that his father and mother had come to town. On making inquiry respecting them, I was told that he had taken them out to the edge of the town to an obscure boarding-place, and was unwilling to have any of his friends know that they were there. He was ashamed to have anybody see the old folks. I learned that they were very reputable, only they were coarse, blunt, Hoosier country people. He had risen to some little eminence, and he felt above them, and was ashamed of them. I had been a warm friend of that young man, but from that time coolness toward him sprang up in my heart. That a son, largely dependent upon the toil which had kept his father and mother in their low condition, they, as it were, plucking out of their own bosom the feathers that made his nest soft, they giving their life that he might live better than they—that he should be ashamed of them seemed as ignominious as anything could possibly be.

Do not, then, let your new associations and new-fangled notions of gentility make you ashamed of the plain old home, nor of the plain old people that are there. Be hearty; be manly; be faithful.

And if before you came from home you pledged your troth to any maiden heart, do not let the devil's temptation of a more favorable connection that shall carry you up in life make you unfaithful to your old covenants and vows to her. Be *faithful.*

Do not make haste to change your religion. There is an impression that when a man comes down to the city he must of course be liberalized; that there are many things at home which are narrow; many notions which are prejudices, and many which are superstitions; much that a man ought to leave behind him. And that is all true. But it does not follow that you are in a situation to judge of what things had best be left behind, or what things had best be changed. Do not, therefore, suddenly change anything. If at home you have been accustomed to observe the Lord's day, I beseech of you, do not let the looseness or laxity of the city take away from you this most precious habit. Some may observe it more strictly than others, some may observe it by a different form of observance; but in some way let that day be marked which has always been marked.

If it were but for one single thing which my childhood Sunday did for me, it would be worth all the pains I had to take to keep it; and that is the spiritualizing influence which it produced upon the whole natural world by its, I had almost said, preternatural silence. I remember that when on Litchfield hill the Sunday sun came up and spread abroad its light, no rattling wagons and no shouting voices were heard. All things were still. And my imagination made them stiller. It seemed to me that the heavens had a depth which they never had on other days, and that nature had a serenity which it never wore on other days. It was a day of rest. The unquivering leaves seemed to rest. The birds seemed more domestic and at rest. All labor was suspended. The cattle on a thousand hills rested. The old worn horses, with harness thrown off, rested in the pasture. And even the team that came to carry the old people to church had a Sunday jog far different from that which it had on other days. Everything seemed to speak to me of profound rest. And nature was stamped with a moral character, so that from that day to this I have had a thought of nature which I should not have had except through the influence of this day of rest. And whatever may be the ecclesiastical arguments and religious considerations in respect to this day of rest, it seems to me that no young man ought to leave out of his memory the Lord's day.

You will have peculiar temptations to break up your religious habits. There will be nobody to look after your religious interests. Your associations with your particular church and neighbors will be gone. You are a stranger in a strange place. You are situated so that it is hard for you to settle down and form Sabbath connections. Nevertheless, keep your Sundays in some way. I admit that it is difficult; but all the more benefit it will be to you if you succeed in doing it.

You are in a boarding-house. There is no Sunday there; there are no books there; there is no company for you there. Where shall you go? What shall you do with yourself Sunday morning? What shall you do with yourself Sunday afternoon? What shall you do with yourself Sunday night? There is a great deal of homesickness and there is a great deal of heart-sickness on Sundays. There are a great many young men who would give everything in the world if on Sunday there was somebody that cared for them, and would put the arm about them and say, "My dear old fellow, how do you get on?" somebody whose heart should strike on their hearts. I know how it is. I am sorry it is so. I would to God there were some way in which the young man severed from all moral relations, in the city, could have more Sunday, and more chance to keep Sunday than he now has. There will be more provisions in the direction one of these days. Young Men's Christian Associations will yet have Sunday homes where young men shall find company, and some place in which to renew, in part at least, the associations of their childhood-Sunday.

Do not forget your Bible—and this must come very strong against many of you. Where is your Bible? I wish I could take the statistics. That was one of the things which, when you went away from home, your mother put down at the bottom of your trunk—for she packed your trunk. And when a mother packs the trunk of her boy that is going away from home, many are the tears that she sheds over it. And when your mother packed your trunk she wept, and murmured prayers in your behalf, while you were thinking about, buoyant, hopeful, full of exhilaration at the prospect of going down to New York. And she puts the Bible carefully down at the bottom. She had been saving what she could for a whole month to get money enough to buy the nicest Bible in the village store. And in it is her crooked but beautiful writing—for what mother's handwriting is not beautiful when she writes a child's name in a Bible? And besides your name, it may be that she wrote some little text there. And after wrapping some of your things about the Book she filled up the trunk. And when it was slung on to the coach, and you disappeared, she went back to the place where

she packed it, and prayed for you. And after you came to New York you perhaps took this Bible out of the trunk a few times on Sunday, and felt so badly that you could read but little. And it may be that the young fellows where you boarded, who never thought of reading the Bible, laughed at you. After that perhaps you tried to read it secretly. But finally you forgot to do even that. And not wishing to lose the Bible entirely, you put it back in your trunk. And it has been there five years, and you have not once taken it out. Where is your Bible? There is a whole history in the answer to that question. *Where is your Bible?* Take care of your Bible, and your Bible will take care of you.

I do not propose to discuss with you the question raised in modern times as to the authenticity of this Book. I know that it is as good a pilot as ever was. No man can go wrong if he follows the ethics of the Bible. And there is no place where men need its guidance so much as in these very cities. When you go home to-night some of you may not be able to give the heads of this discourse; but I beseech of you to remember one thing—to hunt up your Bible, and read it again, and make it the man of your counsel, and your guide. It is your mother's Bible. It is your father's Bible.

And then do not abandon your church. I do not mean by that, that a man may not go from the Presbyterian Church into the Episcopal, or from the Episcopal into the Methodist; but this I mean: that it is not wise for a man hastily to change his faith or denomination. It is not wise for this reason: that although there is a great deal of religion that is blessed of God and made efficacious outside of the ordinary doctrinal features, yet, after all, it is oftentimes the case that experience and associations make our own church and religion best to us. I should always advise a person not to change unless he had a clear conviction that it was best for him to change. I never try to change anybody. There is not a person in this church of two thousand members who can say that I ever said a word to bring him here away from the church in which he was bred. I have the most profound respect for early associations. I think they are full of nutriment, of rest, and of restraint. I should say, therefore, generally, If you have been accustomed to worship in the Episcopal Church, continue there, unless there is some strong and clear reason why you should leave it. If you have been accustomed to go to the Presbyterian Church, continue to go to that. Go where the associations of your childhood will still be played upon, and will still tend to hold you in the right way. If, however, after due consideration, you find a way that makes you happier, holier, more prayerful, more self-denying, then never refuse to change. Do

not do it from novelty, and do not do it from a mere transient preference; but if you find the spirit of godliness quickened in you, and a deeper Christian life incited in you, under one administration rather than under another, go to the one that affects you most favorably. For the effect of a church upon your heart is the best test of that church's desirableness.

Do you ask me whether I would recommend one to do it, no matter what the denomination might be? Yes, without any exception. No child of mine should ever come to me and give me evidence that his life was really becoming sweeter and deeper and holier, and ask my permission to go into any other fold of Christ on earth, that I would withhold such permission. I would go with that child, and put his hand in the pastor's hand, and give him up cheerfully. It is the hidden soul-life that is more important than any of the schools by which that soul-life is to be ministered unto.

But as far as possible it is desirable that a man's later life should run in the line of his earlier life. There is something beautiful to me in the thought of worshiping with the same view of God which we did in our childhood. There is something very sad to me in every change which I make from my childhood views. I do not like novelties; I would to God I could believe just as I did when I was a boy; but changes are going on in different directions. It is not pleasant to me. It is very painful. It is like tearing a branch out of a tree. I would like to worship my father's God, as my father worshiped him. I would like to die with the same symbols in my hand with which I began my childhood life. But I cannot. And when you cannot do it, see that the changes which you make are made in the way of greater godliness, and not in the way of fashion or of worldly influence.

Beware, in such great cities as this, of the influence of the external world upon your ideas of human life and duty. In such cities as this there are many things that have an effect upon our education. There is much that goes in at the ear, and much that impresses us through the eye. Our senses are perpetually stimulated by the things which are around about us. Life tends to become practical rather than spiritual. The value of *things* tends to gain at the expense of the value of *qualities*. In the city you need to live by faith more than anywhere else. You need to realize invisible things, which are more importantly true than any visible things can be. In cities we are dazzled by the glitter, deafened by the din, and worried by the excessive excitement. Men are very easily led into worldly routine. They cease to become reflective. They live by sight; by the things that they hear; by newspaper lore. They live upon the surface.

They neither study nor read carefully. They seldom think upon or review what they read, for the purpose of being built up inwardly and solidly of the best qualities of manhood. Therefore beware of importunate influences coming on your senses. See to it that you are carrying on a digestion within, and building up a true knowledge, and educating yourself aright both for this life and the life which is to come.

Though you are young and strong and healthy, there is no certainty that your life will be long continued in this world. I do not say this to alarm you. You have often been to Greenwood. Is it not a beautiful place to go to? There is no place that is more beautiful to me than that. I would as lief drive through those grounds as through the Park—and I do not know but I would rather. In the Park I see people that are dead though living; and in Greenwood I see people that are dead, and stay dead. But there is nothing that affects me so much in Greenwood as to see how few old people are buried there. Really, one would suppose, from seeing the inscriptions on the grave-stones, that there had not been any old people in New York. I have sometimes gone along with my pencil and made memoranda of the number of persons that died in youth, or in the bright and radiant mid-day of life; and the proportion of such would surprise you. If you think not, please go down, sometime, and see for yourselves. I think it would do you all good. And then, to see the places where poor people are buried, and where strangers are buried—I think nothing in the whole city of New York ought to do a man so much good as that. When I see them I have a great many thoughts. I imagine where the strangers came from, how they died, and how they felt, when dying. I imagine a thousand things. And especially to see where the children of the poor are buried touches me more than anything else. I am not sorry to see people who are able, put carved monuments or grave-stones with inscriptions on them over the graves of their children; but to see people go and bury their own little children there with nothing but a head-stone, and a little box, with a glass cover, containing the child's play-things—little dolls, little wagons, shells, pebbles, and such things—to show that they love the darlings, this always affects me more than anything else. These graves of poor children are sacred. And the playthings that cover them are sacred. I do not believe that even the vagrant boys of the Five Points would steal them. It seems as though God's angels took care of the children of the poor. To go through those grounds and reflect upon these things, has done me a great deal of good, and it will do you a great deal of good if you will try it.

I say this to come to the thought, that, while I would not have you go away gloomy and sad, I desire that every one of you should think that you may be spending your last years on earth, and that what you are to do here below you are to do quickly. I would like to have you from day to day, and from month to month, and from year to year, lay out your pleasures and ambitions, and all that is to compose your life, with a consciousness that you shall ere long give account at the judgment seat of Christ. You are not far from it. Many of you shall be called before many days to attend the funerals of some that are here. Some of you will die soon, and some of you will live to be forty or fifty years old; but you do not know which will go nor which will remain; and it is good for us all, once in a while, to stop and listen to the beat of the surf on the shores of eternity. It is well once in a while to cleanse ourselves of the fascinations and allurements of this world by bathing in the still and solemn waters of imagined death. Oh, what coolness it will give to the fever of men! Oh, what a check and restraint it will be to heated passions! Oh, what moderation it will impart to over-excited imaginations and desires!

I beseech of you (more especially I speak to those who have no other adviser, and who are willing to listen to my words as to an older brother's or a father's words) to pause. Think whether in your career any other thing is so good for you, or will make you so prosperous, as to follow in the footsteps of the old patriarch, and say, as he said,

"If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We bless thee, our Heavenly Father, for all thy great mercies to us in the days that are past, and for that hope which has been inspired by our experience for the days to come. Thou hast watched over us tenderly. Thou hast granted to us to know thee, whom to know aright is life eternal. Thou hast, by thy Spirit, breathed a new light into our souls; and by this light thou hast brought us to a higher life, and to a better judgment of things below.

And now we stand by thee, instructed of thee, and beloved of thee, children unabashed, bold with the boldness of affection, and with thy command to come boldly to the Throne of grace to obtain mercy and help in time of need. Grant, we beseech of thee this evening, that we may have the token of thy presence. For, is there ever a time that is not a time of need? Do we not need thee for the body's sake? Do we not need thee more for the sake of the soul that is within the body? Do we not need thee rising up and sitting down, in counsel, in action, at home and abroad? Wherever we are, do we not need thee? Do we not need thee in our joy and in our sorrow, in our sin and in our repentance, in our backsliding and in our return to God? Thou art everywhere, and we continually find thee present, and always need thy presence, for refreshment, for confirmation in good, for dissuasion from evil, for all helpfulness. And we are glad to think that thou art He who art sitting in the center of all power, and from whom all things do proceed; that thy heart toward us is the heart of a Father, and that thy feelings are the feelings of long-suffering and tender mercy.

And we rejoice that thou wilt not so love us as to suffer us to come to evil and to harm. Thou wilt not pass by transgression. Thou wilt not suffer guilt to go unpunished. Thou dost love us so that thou wilt be faithful to us as we are faithful to our children. We chastise them with stripes which wound our own hearts. So wilt thou be faithful to us, and wilt not suffer us to go wrong unchastised and unrebuked.

And we rejoice that it is in thine heart to bring us toward true manhood. It is not in nature to do it; it is not in our own will; it is not in the will of those around about us. Of thee we must be born. We must find our way to ourselves through thy guidance. We rejoice, therefore, in the manifestation of thyself in Jesus Christ, and in the shedding abroad of the Holy Spirit, by which we are enlightened and inspired, and by which we shall be sanctified.

And now, we pray that we may submit ourselves to thy benevolent kindness, to thy care and education, more implicitly. May we as little children be led by the hand of thy providence. May we, as children that have grown to know their parents, be led by the love of thy heart. And we beseech of thee that we may from day to day grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

If there be hindrances in the way of any, wilt thou help them to remove them. If there be easily besetting sins, help them to overcome them. If there be temptations that lie in ambush, mightier than their power of resistance, open a way of escape for them. If there be those that are discouraged from their repeated weaknesses and failures to be what Christians should be, grant, O Lord, that they may still pluck up their courage. May they gird themselves for new enterprises, and to the end of life strive for that bright and shining and better way.

We pray that thou wilt have under thy guardianship those that are beginning life, before whom are all its experiences. We who have thrust so much of life behind us, who have made our sign, our stamp, our seal, upon so many years—what have we in the future but to hope for the consummation of the

few remaining years which are allotted us here, and then our entrance upon the heavenly rest?

How many there are who, after their life in the world was closed, lived on, and still live, in the world beyond! And the many who stand in strength and good cheer, the many who stand ignorant of right and wrong, the many whose passions are ready to draw them aside, the many for whom snares are laid, the many who are watched for that they may be destroyed—O thou that wast their fathers' God, may the prayers that have been offered for them be heard.

And we pray that thou wilt by thy grace and providence snatch those from the hands of the destroyer who without help will be destroyed. Return any that are already going into forbidden ways. And we pray that thou wilt confirm and establish in the right way those who are doubting. And we beseech of thee that the young may grow up more virtuous, more honorable, more wise, and more just, than those have been who have preceded them.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt cleanse this great city, and the great city upon our border. Grant that purity and morality and the fear of God and the love of man may prevail, and injustice and wickedness and corruption in every form be rebuked and hide themselves.

We pray for our whole land. We beseech of thee that we may have peace in our midst, and that men may be bound to their fellow-men by benevolence, and that there may be no more hating and hurting and destroying.

Oh, for the day of righteousness! Oh, for the time when the heart of God shall be felt in the hearts of men! May there be more pity and less contempt. May there be more helpfulness and less hindering. May there be more knowledge and less prejudice. May there be more that shall bind together, and less that shall divide and separate.

Let thy kingdom come everywhere. May nations learn war no more. May peace come and settle down upon the earth, its final possession. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word spoken to-night. Grant that the beginnings of thoughts of good may not be extinguished. Thou that wilt not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax until thou dost bring forth judgment unto victory, oh, be tender and gentle with the rising thoughts of a better life in those who have been beguiled! Oh, help those to break away from sin who have been ensnared by it Have compassion on those who are destroying themselves. Hold back the children of pious parents. Hold back those who have been much prayed for. Oh, remember their mothers. Remember their fathers. Remember self-sacrificing sisters that toil and labor to sustain brothers far away. Remember those who, having been brought up in homes of purity, are now without home, exiled, struggling for life, amid the bewilderments and temptations of this great city. God, take care of the young, and help them. O Lord Jesus, inspire them to look unto their fathers' God, the God of their youth, the God of all love and all helpfulness. And so may they live that this life shall be a victory. And by it may they achieve an entrance into that life which is to come—into the heavenly land. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

THE HEART-POWER OF THE GOSPEL

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.—Rom. I. 16.

That *also* is extremely bold. It required no small measure of courage at that time, and under those circumstances, and in the speaker, to have dared to say that, simple as it is now. There was a time when to have said, before a Hebrew audience, that the Gentiles were to have the same privileges as the Jews, would have brought down on one's head a shower of stones. The near approach which the apostle makes to this thought in many of his epistles indicates the state of feeling which existed in the olden time. We make nothing, now, of the fact that the Gospel is meant for the whole world; but there was a time when the religion of the Old Testament and of Jehovah was supposed to be in such a sense Jewish, that, if any other nation had a share of it, it was stolen. The Jews regarded it as their property. Jehovah was a national God, in their estimation. And to affirm that any other nation had privileges equal to theirs was an assault upon their pride, and upon their whole national feeling. Thus in writing to the Ephesians, the apostle says,

"For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles [on your account], if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery [the hidden thing, the secret], which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit."

What, then, is that prodigious "mystery" that has been hidden so long, and that now, with such wonderful disclosure, is about to be revealed? "That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel." We almost laugh at the thought that that should be the issue, the climax, to it. We are surprised that it should be only that. But ah! at that time it meant a great deal more than it does now. And when he said, "The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek," he spoke a very bold thing.

Sunday Evening, June 25, 1871. Lesson: Matt. XIII. 1-17. Hymns (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 725, 696, "Shining Shore."

What, however, seems to our minds the most surprising is the declaration that he was not ashamed of this Gospel, and of Christ. Why should he be? What is there that one should be ashamed of in the knowledge of the truth of God, and especially in that dispensation of mercy by which God is revealed in Jesus? Is not Christianity respectable, the world over? Is it not the supreme religion? Does not even skeptical philosophy admit that it approaches more nearly to the universal religion than any other? Is it not esteemed of all men? Why should any man be ashamed of it? Sure enough, after eighteen hundred years of growth and fruit, why should any one be ashamed of it? But it was very different then. It was an unknown thing. There are a great many reasons why the apostle may be supposed not to have been ashamed of his ministry and his mission, although they to whom he spoke might have thought that he ought to have been ashamed of them. But put yourself in his position, and see how the whole world must have seemed to him. Plant yourself in the midst of those to whom he came preaching; perceive their prejudices; accept their opinions; stand in the atmosphere which enveloped him; be surrounded by the same public sentiment which was around about him, and see if there was not some courage and some loftiness in his declaring that he was not ashamed of the part that he was playing, nor of the ministry that he was serving.

He was a Jew himself; and I know of nothing that so aptly expresses what the feeling in regard to the *Jew* was, as the statement that he sustained very nearly the same relation to the foremost people of that time that the negro has sustained to the white people in this country—a relation which nearly excluded him from all influence, from all standing, and from a decent hearing. The Jew was detested then, as in mediæval times he was detested. It is only within a comparatively brief period that the Jew had any respectability or liberty among the nations of the earth. But at that time he was particularly odious among all the civilized nations of the earth, almost without exception.

It would seem an unfortunate thing that a new religion should be pioneered by a man who was a detested Jew, than whom one could scarcely have been selected in all the world less likely to succeed.

Then, add to this the fact that Paul, by his own account, had no graces of person; that he had not oratory; that he had none of the skill of philosophy and casuistry and persuasiveness. He was a Jew; and besides that he was not personally impressive. This would seem to render him an object, if of notice at all, of contemptuous notice.

And then, whom did this Jew come to make known? Not himself, surely. Nothing so vile and so unacceptable as himself. Something precious and desirable, evidently. No: he brought tidings of a malefactor! He bore knowledge of one who was regarded as too vile to be tolerated. It might be declared that he was not a malefactor; but the fact was admitted, by his own countrymen, that he had been crucified—and crucifixion was the penalty reserved for the most odious criminals—as disgraceful as the gallows-death in our day.

Paul was going out into all the world, and this was what he was carrying to the people: "You must believe on this crucified convict." It was a strange message, and you see how significant it was, when Paul pitched the battle on that point, and said,

"I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ [not Christ as he appeared in his glory; not Christ as he was to appear when he should come the second time, in the kingdom of his Father's glory] and him *crucified*."

On that Jew, that convict, that odious, crucified man, Paul planted himself, and determined to make the strength of his ministry rest there. He presented Christ in those aspects in which he would be most likely to be rejected of men. It was a bold presentation.

It is to be remembered, too, that the apostle went forth to the Greeks and to the Romans, both of whom were very proud nations, and both of whom, in turn, had been conquerors of the province; and that therefore he brought this odious message, himself odious, to haughty and supercilious listeners. The Greek had had his turn and overrun the land, and beaten down all opposition, and governed the Jews, first with a rod of iron, and afterwards with philosophy, despising them because they had no philosophy. They were without art. Painting and statuary were unknown among them; and architecture was but very little known among them. With the exception of the single instance of the Temple, almost all the remains of architecture in their cities are Greek, and sprang from the hands of their conquerors. Rome succeeded the Greeks in holding power in the province, and had her turn of triumph; and she looked upon this nation as she did upon others that she had subdued. Not only that, she looked upon them as a nation of stiff-necked and hot-headed fanatics. And they were remorselessly dealt with.

Therefore, when Paul went forth to preach the Gospel, he had to preach it to those lofty, proud, conquering nations; and there seemed very little likelihood that he would have a hearing in their presence. The theme was one which had in it no fascinating elements, so far as the carnal sense of man is concerned. It was not even Judaism, which had a temple, and an altar, and a ritual, and glorious chants, and grand popular festivals. In Judaism there

were more or less of exhibitory services. There was something in it for the eyes to rest on. It was largely made up of symbolism, and was not altogether without fascination. But Paul did not go to preach Judaism. He dispossessed himself of it as fast as he could. He disregarded it, saying, "Circumcision is nothing." And yet that was the foundation of the whole Levitical economy. He had nothing to present to the love of beauty. There is no æsthetical element in Christianity; but there is a moral element in it. I do not remember any stroke of what might be called art, or any relation to it, in the teaching of our Saviour. While he used nature, he never used it from a sense of beauty, but always for a moral purpose. The old Hebrew prophets made use of nature. They felt that it was grand and sublime. No figures will surpass those which come from nature. But our Saviour's teachings were more like the Proverbs than like the writings of the Prophets. There was then no sense of beauty in the Jewish mind, to which an appeal could be made, and nothing to satisfy that side of the mind. When the apostle came to the Gentile world, he came to call upon men to believe in an obscure person raised to conspicuity for some reason or other, and put to a shameful death. And what was there in that, which was calculated to contribute to their comfort or joy? He preached of one who said, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest; but it will be by taking my yoke upon you, and bearing my burdens. Can ye drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I shall be baptized withal?" When the apostle went out to preach Christ, no shining way was presented to men. On the contrary, there were in store for them reproach, separation from brethren and households, and even expatriation, and persecution, and bondage, and sorrow, and distress, if they accepted this obscure personage as their Lord and Saviour.

Now, standing among such a people, to deliver such a message, I do not wonder that the apostle felt that he must take issue with them. They would be likely to suppose that the cause which he advocated was very weak. The seeming was that it was an imaginary thing, and that he was fanatical. Such would be the impression produced by his proclamation of the Gospel to the great Gentile world. He therefore took issue with that very point, and said, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ;" as if somebody had been trying to shame him. "I am not ashamed of it, on that very ground on which you think I should be ashamed. I am not ashamed of it on account of its power over the mind, the heart, the soul of men. To every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek, it is the power of God unto salvation. It is the righteous-

ness of God revealed from faith to faith. And this inherent spiritual power has redemption in it."

What, then, are some of those elements which we may suppose the apostle found in the Gospel which he preached, and which gave him joy rather than shame in proclaiming it? In all the instructions of the Saviour, in the whole Gospel, which includes his life and teachings, there is to me a predominant sense of the great world beyond. Nowhere else is there such an atmosphere of the infinite spirit-realm that lies just outside of the border of this world, as in the teaching of the Saviour. And the apostle accepted it as a thing to be believed. He pointed forward to it as a fact relating to the great after-life. And the Greek was drawn toward it by hope, by faith, by love, by arguments, by motives, by persuasions. Immortality was no longer a plant that grew a few years on earth, and then returned no one knew whither. Under the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ, man at once had an outgrowth and an immortality which raised him incalculably in the scale of being. The conception of man as a creature of this world, is, and must be, entirely different from a conception of him as a creature of eternity. If man is born to live threescore years and ten, and then die, in what respect is he better than the leaves of a tree, that flourish through their summer, and then drop and return to the earth? If man has his whole life here, and there is no hereafter, what are the rights of the weak and of the poor? The almost inevitable and irresistible effect of believing that men's life begins and ends in this world, and that they have no life hereafter, is to give power to those that are strong, and to make the strong unmerciful toward the weak. If it were believed that human life was limited to this world, men would say, "What is the difference between an intelligent being and the horse that we do not believe has any life beyond this world, and that we task and kill, getting the most we can out of him, because we believe his existence ends here?" If it is supposed that men have no more life than the beast, then the poor and needy will be trodden down as trash, and nobody will care for them, and death will be the save all and the cover-all, so far as they are concerned.

When, therefore, Christ came to teach that the poor were immortal; that the poorest and meanest had a chance for life beyond this world, he raised men to a dignity and importance which had not before been regarded as belonging to them.

What seeds do in this world, depends upon what their summer is, and whether they have power to go through the winter, and grow again. Some things—deciduous plants—can grow but for one summer. Other things—such as the hollyhock—grow for two summers,

and become larger and more stately. But those things which have a permanent value—trees, such as the century-defying oak, out of which we construct our dwellings, out of which our men-of-war are built, and which have enduring strength—grow on, season after season, and through successive cycles.

Now, if man perishes, he is as the grass indeed; but if he lives hereafter, beyond this world, who shall measure what he shall be? If here you take a poor, obscure man, ignorant, and full of prejudices and superstition—a barbarian, a miserable slave—and measure him, what is he to society? Almost a wart, and nothing else. What is he worth to civilization? He is scarcely a filling-up in life. What is he worth? Just about as much as his hoe is. His value is measured by his power to create; by the skill that is in his hand. What sign is there of an ideal of beauty in his soul? What insignia are there which mark him as superior to the lower animals? What can he do, poor, ignorant, untaught, and undeveloped as he is?

But ah! if that soul is going to have a chance to unfold; if, being temporarily planted here, it is to be transferred to a region where it will have a chance to develop the immortal that is in it; if by and by it shall be transplanted to a better clime and a fairer soil, where it shall have a nobler opportunity for growth, who can tell into what magnificent proportions that earth-neglected but heaven-protected spirit shall spring? Who can estimate the value of that nature which is to go on unfolding forever and forever? It is out of the infinite possibilities of this future immortality which promises all things and projects all things for the least and the poorest, that men draw installments of honor and dignity here.

See the mother sitting by the cradle, and singing to the child. He is her hero. Forelooking, she sees him as a boy ten or twelve years of age, sprightly and comely and beautiful. She sees him as a youth, gay and fair, blossoming and breaking out into life. She sees him issuing into young manhood. She foresees the time when his stalwart form shall support her in the feebleness of age, and as she approaches the grave. She sees him, also, in mature manhood, and in his declining years. He is her hope and pride.

In the midst of her reveries the child wakes up; and it cries, as an animal would cry. It is helplessness itself. It does not even know its mother. It cannot lift its hands intelligently to its face. There is nothing of it. It is a little mass of jelly and bone. Is there anything so insignificant as a new-born babe? And yet, does not the mother see all its manhood? Is there not over that cradle a glory that is borrowed from the possibilities of coming years?

And is not the mother right? He *is* a hero. She has the faith to discern the future of his life.

And oh, what grandeur there is in men, to one who has faith to believe that they shall never die! A man may be poor for society, poor for the household, and poorest of all for himself in this life—for *if in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable.* But oh, to have light and immortality brought to light as a measure by which to judge of men; to have diffused a knowledge of the world beyond; to have opened the crystal door of the future; to have let in a light which should change all the aspects of things, and reveal the glories of the world to come—this is not a small thing. And you shall find that where there is most intelligent and righteous and permanent liberty, it is the result of the inspiration of those views of immortality which came from Christ Jesus, which have blest mankind through ages, and which will go on blessing them to the end of time.

The intensity of the divine desire for the emergence of men from the lower states in which they are born in this world into higher spiritual conditions, is prominently developed in the Gospel of Christ. All through the teaching of the Saviour I discern sympathy for men, not exactly because they are sinful, but because they are crude, undeveloped, ignorant, untaught; because they are sufferers, and are destined to greater suffering if they could not be rescued. I perceive in the teaching and character and earthly life of Christ, that his soul was attempting to draw men up from the beggarly bondage of their fleshly condition into the freedom and to the glory of a truly spiritual life. It was as if they were animals in whom manhood had begun to be developed. It was as if the heart of God was pouring down light and warmth upon them. As the sun shines on homely roots, so God shone on men. And then came the development of the Spirit, to the divine nature that was in them.

This was not altogether new. There had been schemes of something like this in other faiths and religions—for there are some elements of truth in all forms of belief; but nowhere else had there been such an emphasis given to this. Nowhere else was there ever a heart that beat so intelligently and so effectually as the heart of Christ standing in the place of God to men, and bearing witness to the divine desire that men should be inspired, lifted up, redeemed, enfranchised, ennobled, and made sons of God. What a view of God does this render to us! What a view must it have rendered to those who were accustomed to look at him with the eyes of antiquity! Listen to the description of God which is given in the next chapter:

"Despiseth thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

How sublime a view was this of the moral development of the world, and of a God that nurses the world with love! The magisterial and despotic view of God is one side. But there is another side. There had been a presentation of God as wise and just, addressed to the forceful nature of men; but the view of a God of infinite love, guided by his wisdom, opening for the whole race a door of escape from the physical reality into the region of spirituality—this certainly was a new presentation of the great central force of the universe, not as a blind fate, not as a crushing destroyer, not as a subtle Machiavelian God, issuing his decrees, but as a Mother-God, a Father-God, a Brother-God, a nourishing God, that brings up his creatures in love.

This was the presentation of God which the Gospel contained; and the test of his love to men was, not that he never caused them pain. Suffering is often a test of love. Our love to others is not measured by how glad it makes them feel. It is not bursts, impetuosities of feeling, but its continuity, the length of time that it will continue to exist when once it is set in operation, that tests its value. Earthly feelings are like rockets that go blazing into the sky, but very soon fall, drawn by fatal attraction, to the earth; and how long before it is extinguished, how long it will bear pressure, how long it will endure suffering, how disinterested it is, how much it will give—that is the test of human love; and human love is found to be very imperfect when measured by that test.

But was there ever love like that of God in Christ Jesus? Was there ever anything which so filled the measure of disinterested love as that of Christ Jesus for his enemies? Was there ever a more sublime exhibition of love than that which he manifested when, hanging upon the cross, he prayed for his crucifiers, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"?

The personality of God; the sympathy of God for mankind; the reduction of God to those conditions of humanity in which we can interpret the divine nature, and understand that divinity consists, not in magnitude, not in power, not in force, but in disposition, and that love is the center of that disposition—this is transcendent. It is the secret of the power of the Gospel in Christ Jesus.

The universe is now revealed to be a household. We know what a household is; but when we say the universe is a household, we do not mean that it is such a one as ours is. Yet to us there is no place so sweet as home. There is nothing that touches so many hearts, and touches them so sweetly, as the thought of home—a

thought that is selected as the symbol or sign of the divine purpose in regard to the race. And the universe being a household, we are taught to draw near to Jesus in all the universe, and say, "Our Father." When I do this, I am knocking at the door of my Father's house. And when I have found Christ I have found him who is my Father.

How different is this view from the ancient conception, or from that modern conception which men are so desperately disposed to rush into! What can be more comforting than the thought that all mankind are a family, and that God is large enough and wise enough to govern by his personality? Men are not, and therefore they have a clumsy machinery of laws. No magistrate can govern by his personality. No man can be trusted to do it. Men's nobler impulses are so blended with their lower passions that their judgment is not a safe guide; and so, not because it is the best thing, but because it is the best thing that we in our imperfect condition can attain to, we resort to constitutions and laws. Constitutions and laws are means which are employed for bolstering the weakness of the men that stand behind them to administer them. But God stands above all these things. He governs, not by laws nor by constitutions, but by his mind and heart, saying, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. I am not tied. I stand in my own personality. I am free to feel sympathy and affection whenever and wherever I will." God is perfectly wise and just, and true and unerring, and therefore he can act without restraint. The conception revealed in Christ, of the Eternal Father, of the governing God, is that he is one who stands in the plenitude of his being, administering in heaven and earth by the power of his own regnant heart, and not from the blind impulse of law; from the liberty that inheres in his own nature, and not from any coercion outside of himself. How grand is the conception of such a God, with such a power and such a purpose, administering throughout the universe!

But there is no attribute of God so wonderful as his patience. There is nothing so marvelous in the divine nature as God's long-suffering. We cannot bear to contemplate the atrocious wickedness which we see around about us. We are repelled in a moment from things which seem to us so flagitious. Oh, what a smoke has gone up from the corruptions of this world! What hideous cruelties there have been! What wrestlings of animal with animal! What rage and fury! What lust and crime! But God has patiently borne it all. And he has waited, and still waits, for the development and purification of the race. The ages have rolled by, and

thus far the earth has borne little fruit; but it is like an orchard filled with trees that shall bear abundant and glorious fruit in the ages that are to come; and God has waited, and is waiting, and will wait to the end. God is glorious as a God of love and mercy; but he is more glorious as a God of infinite long-suffering and patience.

When we come to have these thoughts of the divine nature brought out, we see that there was good reason why the apostle should say, "I am not ashamed of such a God nor of such a Gospel. That is the message which I dare to stand before any heathen temple and proclaim."

To be sure, heathenism had a great advantage over the Gospel. All that art could do had been done to redeem heathenism from vulgarity, and cover up its deformities, and make it beautiful to the eye; and Paul had only this spiritual or ideal conception of God to present. But where it found a lodgment it led to most astonishing results. Where it was preached to the poor and needy, it inspired them with great hope and confidence. Where it was brought home to the guilty, it awakened in them such a sense of their guilt and of God's grace in their forgiveness, that they were inspired with purposes to live holy lives, and began to live such lives. And in the midst of those lives more and more of the light of truth dawned upon them.

There is no description that can fitly represent the sensations of the men to whom the Gospel came. All they could say was, "I was dead, but am alive; I was lost, but am found; I was in prison, but am released. By the grace of God I am what I am. He is my Friend, my Lover, my Saviour, my Father." Their souls were so awakened, their manhood was developed to such proportions, they manifested such hidden power, they had such faith and courage, and their experience was such, that they were transformed.

Under the influence of this blessed truth, the household was revolutionized, and Christianity gradually established itself in the earth. It never established itself by symbols and rituals of worship. These came after its decadence began. The beginnings of Christianity had for their foundation the power of Christ brought into the individual soul. When once men had been convicted of their sins, and Christ had been presented to them as their Saviour, and they apprehended him, and his Spirit had entered into them, they became so sweet, there was such nobleness in their disposition and purpose, that they were capable both of forbearance and achievement. They had those qualities of manhood which were exceedingly rare, and which were never inspired by the cunning philosophy of the stoics.

Men of no learning, no culture, were found springing up into moral sublimity. There grew up in every city bodies of men on whom the Spirit of God had descended, and who exhibited all those traits which it is the nature and design of Christianity to develop. There is abundant testimony of the triumph of noble qualities in the lives of the early Christians. No man can read the Epistles of the Apostle Paul and not see that the power which he exerted was that of regenerated character, a spiritualized disposition, and a new manhood in Christ Jesus. It is that power which comes when God's influence is felt in the human soul. Then manhood takes unexpected development. Then come, with grand disclosure, those things which men vainly seek for in other ways. They blossom profusely, and reappear as fast as plucked. And so it was this spectacle of what the Gospel does to the heart of man that filled the Apostle with joy and confidence.

No man has ever preached the Gospel who has not felt that so long as he looked at it as a mere speculation it was full of loop-holes; that there were many things in it which seemed contradictory and inexplicable. If I had reliance only upon pure intellection, I should be as a reed shaken in the wind. But I never try to put myself in the attitude of God toward a human being, I never have my heart alive with glowing sympathy toward a fellow-creature, I never feel my soul moved with an earnest desire to benefit another, that I have not an intuition, a certainty, of the existence of God and of his Fatherhood, which cannot come through any process of the intellect. God discloses himself, not through the intellect, but through the heart; he is revealed to us through our own likeness to him. And it is by this revelation that we are able to make known the lost condition of men, and the undeveloped power in them of recuperation; that we are all able to stand before men and say, "The law is that he that sinneth shall suffer in proportion to the sin, or shall die; that if the sin passes a given line, or goes beyond a certain magnitude, there is no drawing back, and no medicine or surgeon that can keep the sinner from suffering the penalty." But I stand and look that economy in the face, and say, in respect to all mental and moral transgression, that while it is true that the soul that persistently sins shall die, while there is a law that rolls men on and down to destruction if they do not turn back, yet the soul that sins *may live*. The Lord God hath declared it. And while material nature stands saying, "You shall suffer the consequences of your transgression," the heart of God stands and says, "I would not have you die. Why will you die? In me is your help and your life." The higher nature, the truest part of nature, the subtle, ineffable blossom of nature, is

that which the soul knows about, and the body does not. Away, chemistry! What do you know about nature? You take the shuck, and analyze that; but you know nothing of what the shuck contains. You have examined the dirt out of which the plant grows; but you are ignorant of the blossom in the topmost bough. This is made known only through a knowledge of God in Christ Jesus. It is a truth of the Gospel that there is remedy for sin, and salvation for the sinner; that as soon as we are touched by the Divine Spirit, we have power to rise superior to transgression; that then all the past is changed, and all the future is guaranteed. And when I make known this Gospel, if I am ever ashamed, it is of the intellectual propositions in which men try to clothe these high spiritual truths. If I am ever shaken in my faith, it is on the side of metaphysics and philosophy. I am never ashamed nor faithless when I make a practical use of the truth as it is revealed in Christ. I never undertook to comfort one that was in distress; I never attempted to encourage one that wanted to do well, and did not know how; I never tried to act toward men as God acts toward them, that I had a doubt, and that I did not feel and know that I had touched the marrow of the Gospel. I know in whom I have believed and trusted. I know that the truth of God is a truth of love, of mercy, of recuperation, of a new life, of a life kindled in the soul. The marriage of the soul to Christ--that is the disclosure of the Gospel. And this blessed Gospel Paul was not ashamed of. Certainly, we ought not to be ashamed of it if he was not. On the contrary, every one of us ought to be grateful for it.

It was winter. My honeysuckle had lost all its leaves. It was barren and odorless. But there came from the far south the warm and reviving sun, and called and called to the honeysuckle, and awaked its life. And it began to hold out its hands to the sun. And no sooner did the renewed sap begin to flow through its vines, than they began to exhale fragrance and thanksgiving to the sun that brought out their blossoms.

And shall you, planted in the garden of the Lord, have the blessed hope and sweet conviction that you are disenthralled from a thousand dangers, and hear your Heavenly Father's voice calling you by precious names of love and honor, without expressing as much gratitude as the vines that never forget to blossom in beauty and give thanks in fragrance? Shall God do for you what he has been doing, and have no requital? Shall you enjoy the bounty and experience, the benefit of God's love, and then hide your light under a bushel and not let brother or sister know that you are in Christ? That name should be to you as the sound of music. Sing it. Speak it.

Proclaim it. Lift up your voice as a trumpet, and let men know in whom you hope, and why you believe you shall triumph over death, and fly above the world, and never touch its smoke, until you land in the realm of glory.

Many of you can testify that this power is not wanting yet. You are yourselves witnesses of the living power of God in Christ. And so long as the preaching of the Gospel of Christ shall make men over again, and reform society, and heal its wounds, and cleanse its sores; so long as it shall be able to set men free from temptations and enable them to cultivate sweet affections and glorious sentiments—so long none of us need be ashamed of it.

Therefore teach the Gospel. Make it known to your children. Let it be the lullaby from which the child learns tidings of God and of Christ. Let it be your theme in the household. Blend the love of the Father in heaven with the love of the father upon earth. As the child learns early to love his earthly parents, let there be an extension of his love, so that it shall love the Lord who gave himself for even the least of the little ones, to redeem him from sin, and to make him glorious as a king in the presence of God.

By this grace and by this glorious love shed abroad in our hearts, transforming us, may we all, from day to day, and from year to year, be grandly proud and triumphant, and not ashamed of this Gospel, until we stand among the shouting heavenly throng, more enthusiastic than ever in our rejoicings, in view of the salvation wrought by Jesus Christ. And in our joy, let us cast our crowns at his feet, saying, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name, be the praise forever and forever."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We thank thee, our Father, for the revelation of thyself through Jesus Christ our Lord. We bless thee that the knowledge of salvation through his grace has been brought to us, and that so many of us have been inclined to accept mercy at his hand. We thank thee that thou hast kindled in us hope, and joy, and peace in believing. We thank thee that although we have not plucked the fruits that grow by the side of the river of life, yet we have had great joy and great delight even in anticipation, more than springs from the realization of earthly joy. We thank thee that all the light and air of the future falls upon our path, and that, though for a time it may be hid, the light comes again, and the darkness no longer rests upon us as it did, because thou hast spoken peace to our souls. Thou hast taught us that we are thine. Thou hast entered in to dwell with us. Thou hast been our blessed guest. Thou hast brought, universally, blessings upon us, and we are rich, since thou hast been with us. Thou hast called us by name. Thou hast known us utterly. We are reconciled to thee. Between thee and us there is no more fear. Would that there were no more disobedience and no more unbelief or doubt. Would that we could always abide as upon the top of the mountain, and behold thee in thy glory, and rejoice in the testimonies of thy divinity. And yet, even when our mind is clouded, and doubts come, though for the time it is not joyous, but grievous, yet afterward it worketh in us the peaceable fruit of righteousness. We rejoice that thou dost try us, and that our faith is put to proof, and that we must needs endure by patience, and by the sense of the invisible, and by faith in God, and not by what we can understand of God's providence. We desire to commit ourselves to thy guidance. What is there that we would withhold from thee? What treasure, what favorite plan, what friendship, what hope or joy in life, is not better for the shining of thy face upon it? We rejoice, O Lord, that we may commit all we have to thy power and wisdom, and that thou wilt overrule everything so that it shall work for good to us. Even so, blessed Saviour. Take what thou wilt away. Put what thou wilt upon us. Grant thyself, grant peace with thee, grant thy cleansing hope and thine enlightening faith, and it matters not what else our experience is below.

And now we beseech of thee that thou wilt teach us to win others, and that we may be able to give unto all whom we love, and all who are yet in the darkness of unbelief, that power by which we were made willing.

We pray that thy work may be revived in the hearts of thy people, and that it may be planted in many hearts where now is a wilderness.

O Lord, we pray that thou wilt glorify thyself in thy triumphs over thine adversaries. Redeem souls from selfishness. Redeem those who are now resisting thee and thy laws. Grant that they may be made of a better mind. May they return with repentance, and find in sorrow joys unspeakable and full of glory. We pray for thy churches, and for those that minister thy truth. In thee may their strength be from day to day. Augment their skill and power in the proclamation of the truth. May they see that their labor is not in vain. May the seed they sow spring up and bring forth a hundred fold.

We pray for thy cause in every form. We pray that wars may cease; that all the contentions of selfishness and ambition may cease; that men may no longer live by their worst side. Teach men to live, we beseech of thee, by that which allies them to God and to immortality. May ignorance be done away, and justice, and moderation of desire, and purity, and love prevail among this people, and among the nations of the earth. And make haste, we beseech of thee, to grant the fulfillment of those promises which respect the

glory of the good in the last days of the earth. Let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Grant, our Father, thy blessing to rest upon the word of truth which has been spoken. Draw us by the sweetness of love into more intimate relations to thee. Give us not only the knowledge of outward things, but the better knowledge of things that come by the inward sense. Teach not only our understanding, but our moral sense. Interpret to us, by our daily experience, more and more of the mystery of God. Enter in, according to thy promise, not simply to sup with us, but to dwell and abide with us. And may we be so transformed that all our life shall be as the life of Christ, so that we may be said to be one with him. And grant that we may never be unwilling to speak for Christ. May we never shrink from his cross and shame. May we interest ourselves in every cause that is of God, and that represents the love of God, and the purity of God, and the justice of God, and the truth of God. So may we be thy faithful children indeed. And then bring us home. And may we be glad to find that we are already known in heaven, our names written in the Lamb's Book of Life. And from golden gates may there stream a multitude which shall lift up a song of gladness and rejoicing, and give us an exceeding and abundant entrance into the kingdom of thy glory. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

I propose this evening to make some remarks on the Lord's Prayer. You will find it recorded in the sixth chapter of Matthew, and the ninth verse, and onward; and in the eleventh chapter of Luke, beginning with the first verse. They only, of the four Evangelists, make mention of this prayer. And there is some difference between the account given of it by Luke, and that given of it by Matthew.

We find it embodied in the Gospel of Matthew with the Sermon on the Mount, having its organic relations to that memorable discourse, and seeming to spring necessarily out of the circumstances under which the Sermon took place. Any one who reads the Sermon on the Mount will find that the Lord's Prayer occupies just the place that was needed for the completion of the whole discourse. And yet, Luke speaks of it as if it were delivered on another occasion. This has given rise to the impression that, perhaps, it was delivered twice. And yet, if it was delivered twice, it is very singular that Mark, the most accurate, perhaps, of the four Evangelists, and John, the most devout, should both of them have omitted it. The words of Luke are,

"And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

In Matthew's version, you will find that there is the Doxology appended. It is the familiar Jewish Doxology:

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever."

This is unquestionably a later edition. The familiar and ordinary Jewish Doxology was added to the text, and the earliest editions omitted it. The best scholars now agree, therefore, that the form in Matthew is purer than the form in Luke. That is to say, that it is fuller, since it contains this addition, which the form in Luke does not.

You will perceive that Luke's account of this prayer is not inconsistent with its being a part of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus was

SUNDAY EVENING, Feb. 25, 1871. LESSON: 1 PET. II. 9-25. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 1335, 816, 715.

returning from one of those Galilean circuits of which he made so many ; and coming in sight of the sea of Galilee he stopped to feed the vast multitude which had followed him, or come forth to meet him. It is recorded that he withdrew from them, and went up into the mountains, and spent the night in prayer. He came down from the mountain in the morning, apparently, and met his disciples—his nearest, chosen disciples—had some converse with them, and then went down to the multitude. It is probable that he began his discourse there. But such was the throng, that he retired still further up ; and there he delivered the discourse.

This reconciles the two statements—one of which says that he delivered this sermon on a plain (apparently an immense level plain) ; and the other of which declares that he delivered it upon a mountain (for that term *mountain* was used to signify an upland, and not what we mean when we use it.)

It seems that our Master, after spending the whole night in prayer, ascended, and began his Sermon on the Mount. And when you read that Jesus taught men to pray in the midst of this sermon, you must not allow yourself to be misled by the term *sermon.* You must not think of a church, of a minister, of a text, and of a regular discourse such as you are accustomed to associate with this word. The Sermon on the Mount was no such thing. There can be no question that it was delivered in the most familiar way, and that he was sometimes standing and sometimes sitting—for both terms are employed to designate the method. And there is no doubt that it was interlocutory—that he discussed a certain point, and then received questions upon it which he answered. Although none of these questions are reported, the discourse itself bears marks, if I may so say, which indicate them. Topics are introduced and terminated in a way which shows that there were some sort of intervals. Though they are not locked one into another, there were stops, evidently ; and it is not improbable that he was interrogated in the midst of his discourses, and that after he had replied he went on. It is not unreasonable to suppose that thus he went from point to point. It is recorded that one said to him,

" Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples,"

and we may believe that this took place during the progress of the Sermon on the Mount.

We are not, then, necessarily driven to the supposition that this prayer was twice delivered—once during the Sermon on the Mount, and once when he was asked to teach his disciples how to pray, as John taught his. This latter account is perfectly consistent with the former ; and it is probable that the circumstance recorded

by Luke took place when he was delivering the Sermon on the Mount.

Another question of some interest arises—namely, Was this Lord's Prayer original with our Master, or was it but a collection of the best Rabbinic prayers, or the best prayers of the Jewish people aforetime? This question is important only because the most modern spirit puts undue emphasis upon originality. It is the things which are original that call forth our highest approbation. Ah, what an original sermon! What an original letter! What an original book! Where one has been wearied by repetition, an original thing is very refreshing. But we are in danger of overestimating originality, and making mere freshness or first delivery more important than the intrinsic quality of the thing delivered.

This leads us to state that probably almost every petition in the Lord's Prayer, although not to be found in precise terms, might have been found in sentiment among the best Jewish writings during or preceding, his day. I do not affirm that they were found; I merely say that so far as the value of the Prayer is concerned, and so far as the honor of the Saviour is concerned, I would just as lief as not that you would find every one of them in the Old Testament.

It is not in the originality of the Sermon on the Mount that its beauty, or power, or importance, or value consists. Nearly every single sentence of the Beatitudes I can show you, in almost the same words, in the Prophets and the Psalms; and the sentiments are contained there over and over again. "Blessed are the poor"; "Blessed are they that mourn"; "Blessed are the peacemakers"; "Blessed are the meek"—these declarations were made before Christ uttered them, if not in precise phraseology, yet in sentiment. And why should we hesitate to believe that among such a people, educated specially by the divine Providence, under the guidance of the Lord Jehovah, where so many prayers had been made, where prayers were so universal, and where they were so necessary to the right condition of men—why should we hesitate to believe that among such a people, and under such circumstances, these petitions of the Lord's Prayer were offered ten thousand times? Why should we suppose that they were first uttered when Christ delivered the Sermon on the Mount? I have no question that the substance of that Prayer, although it had not existed in the same form, or in the same phraseology in which Christ presented it, had been known and employed by thousands of souls.

It is therefore no reproach, and it takes nothing from the value of the Lord's Prayer, nor from this whole discourse, to say that they

were not original with Christ; that they were not then first invented when he gave them to his disciples. We know it was so in respect to the discourse at large.

Most excellent men have called the Sermon on the Mount a *charter of Christianity*. There could be nothing more unfortunate than that term. It was not prospective; or, it was so only to a secondary extent. It was retrospective. It was a distinct summing up of the vast knowledge that had accrued to God's people up to that time, and a giving them the highest spiritual instruction. It was expressly designed to bring together what men had already learned, that from that, as a starting-point, the new dispensation and the new life might *go on* developing. And the key-note was given in these two sentences:

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

We find, therefore, that the Sermon on the Mount, of which so much is said, as being a sufficient foundation of Christianity, was not original, so far as the matter of which it was composed is concerned. It simply grouped and gathered together all those elements of truth which had already been disclosed. The Sermon on the Mount had not one single sentence about faith: is there no faith in Christianity? It had not a single word about Christ, or a Redeemer: is there no Redeemer in Christianity? It had not a syllable on the subject of death or immortality: is there no death nor immortality in Christiany? It had nothing of future punishment or reward: is there nothing of these in Christianity? Can that be all of Christianity which has no teaching of an eternal world, nor of an atoning Saviour? The Sermon on the Mount was in some respects a true exposition of Christianity, or of a part of it—that part which had been derived from the Jewish church. Gathering together in that matchless discourse the best things which had been brought to light, he said, as it were, "Take these, now, into the spiritual life. Let them contribute to your highest development. Adopt this Prayer as yours. When it is claimed as Jewish, I give it to the Jews; it was not original with your Jesus; but it was inspired by Jehovah, although it came through the old dispensation; and it is just as good for your purpose as though it had been first uttered by me."

Nothing is taken from it, to prove that it was in existence before Christ's time. The beauty and power of it do not depend upon its being shown to have been first thought of when the Saviour announced it to his disciples. It is the combination of the elements of

which it is composed, and their incorporation into a higher spiritual life, that makes them beautiful and powerful.

Another question arises, namely, Was this Prayer of our Saviour a model and suggestion of prayer, or was it a form to be used liturgically? I hold it to have been a suggestion. There is no objection to using it as a form liturgically; but there is no evidence (and much to the contrary) that our Saviour designed that the disciples should take this Prayer, and repeat it word for word, liturgically. If he had so designed, the variations of phraseology in Luke and Matthew would be unaccountable and inexplicable. More than this, if it was to be a set form, and obligatory, how does it happen that there is no further allusion to it in the New Testament? The Saviour never referred to it except on this one occasion. There was no reference made to it by the apostles in their instruction to the churches. Christian churches existed for more than fifty years without a written Gospel; and there is no hint that, by tradition or otherwise, it was made imperative on Christians to repeat the Lord's Prayer in the form in which it stands. It was three hundred years before it began to take on that form, which afterward became a superstition until the *Pater Noster* degenerated almost into contempt. The repetition of it, once, twice, thrice, a hundred times, was supposed to have some virtue. The counting the beads, and saying the Lord's Prayer at every one of them, thus multiplying the mere "vain repetitions" by scores and hundreds, was prescribed, and was supposed to have some inherent benefit in it. This shows how degenerate the Christian heart and imagination had become.

That we are permitted to repeat the Lord's Prayer as a part of a liturgy, I need not argue; but the question as to the wisdom of formulated prayer, as to whether it is better that a prayer should be prescribed, and followed in sequence, and in the same terms always, is involved; and about that I have only to say, that they who find that they can pray better out of the Book have God's dear leave to pray out of the Book. That road in which your feet ascend easiest and fastest toward the heavenly gate is your road; and you need no priest, no minister, no authority, to tell you to walk in it. If you can pray more to edification by the formulated prayers of the church than by extemporaneous prayers, so pray. It is not for me to cast any aspersion upon them. Nor is it for you to turn upon me and say that extemporaneous prayers are indecent and unedifying. You have a right to say that they do not edify you, but not to say that they do not edify me and other people.

It seems unnecessary that there should be a perpetual jar and

collision between the two schools, one of whom write their prayers and then read them, and the other of whom speak out of their soul extemporaneously.

In regard to public service, there is this to be said: that where men have the gift of prayer, it would seem far more edifying that one should pray out of his heart and experience and judgment, and out of his knowledge of the want of the community to which he ministers. On the other hand, where men have not the gift of prayer, where their extemporaneous prayers are dry and useless, one naturally longs for the stately grandeur of the prayers of the Book, —for, if we speak of written prayers, of course we think of those in the dear old Episcopal Prayer-book—the book of our fathers. Although I was not brought up in the Episcopal Church, that church to me is full of venerableness. And indeed, I am filled with gratitude to it for the great service which it has done to Christianity through so many ages. Therefore it seems to me that there is a common ground. Let those use the Book who find the most edification in it; and let those who find their gifts leading them outside of the Book have their liberty. Bear with each other, and rejoice each in the other's gifts and liberties.

In private prayer, however, it seems to me preëminently desirable that men should not lean on the crutches of the book; that every one in his own household, and especially in his closet, should learn, if he has not learned already, to commune with God as one speaks to another, face to face. I am far more clear and decided on this point than I am upon the other.

With these preliminaries, let us analyze a little the contents of the Lord's Prayer. We will take it as it is recorded in Matthew:

"After this manner, therefore, pray ye: Our Father, which art in heaven."

Here you have the standpoint. We are to come to God, not as the subjects of a monarch. Still less are we to come before God as abject servants. And certainly we are not to come into the presence of God as slaves come trembling into the presence of their despot. The very opening of the prayer places us in a filial relation to God. One might say that no man prays well the Prayer of the Lord whose heart does not first cry out, "My Father!" It is the call of the soul to its dearest and best heavenly Friend; and no man who is merely reverential can pray this Prayer. Bow down the head till it touches the ground. Let the heart be weighed down with awe and veneration that does not enable the lip to speak a word aright. It is not what breaks us down before God that fits us to go into his presence. It is that which lifts us up toward him. It is our yearning

for him, our realization of his true paternity, and our corresponding filial affection toward him, which give us liberty to say the first sentence of the Lord's Prayer. It is a sentence that casts its light far back into the old dispensation, and also far forward into the new dispensation. For, whatever you may find in the Old Testament, you will not find much there that would lead men to approach Jehovah as a father. There is a recognition of fatherhood there; but it was not the manner and habit of the people of Israel so to approach their God. It is distinctively Christian in this respect, that it is made to be the genius of Christianity. We are not to go to a crowned monarch. We are not to take our conception of God's code from the codes of civil rulers. We are to lift up, in our imagination and in our affection, the dearest and purest and most loving household. That is the divine ideal of government, as prefigured in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When we draw near to God, therefore, we draw near saying, in the very first sentence, "Our Father." And with that word, what may we not petition for? What may not the child say in the ear of his parent? What confidence is more utter than that which exists between the parent and the child that loves and is loved at home? What is there that the child may not ask of the father; or, what confidence is there that he may not repose in the father? If the child has gone wrong, how easy it is for him to ask forgiveness of the father? Or if the child desires to take on privilege, what is there that he is ashamed or unwilling to ask of his father? For all that the father has is for the children. And although in the household there is a distinction of rights and properties, yet, in proportion as love prevails this distinction is hidden, and other relationships appear; and all who are in the house feel that each is a member of the other, and that they have all things in common. So, whatever there is of beauty, and of good, and of privilege, and of permission, the child freely asks of the father in the household.

This same thing is implied in the very first sentence with which, in the Christian life, we address our God. We are permitted to disarm him of all the terrors which hover around the fate-gods of antiquity; to drop off the magisterial relations which have been associated with him; to no longer see him sitting enthroned with severity on his brow, with justice in his eye, with the implements of power in his hand, and with the circumstance of administration around about him; but to see him sitting as One to whom we may draw near with associations of loving tenderness. And we say, "Our Father." And with that word fear flies, and doubts disappear, and the heart rests.

"Our Father, which art in heaven."

He is not weak or impoverished, as earthly parents are. He is not down on the level of our ignorance. He is not, like us, rolled over the banks of obscure mist and fog. He is lifted above the weakness of life into the immortality and strength and purity and beauty of the heavenly land. He is the glorious Father of an eternal sphere.

"Our Father, which art in heaven."

The little child lisps it. These precious words are among the earliest that we learn to utter. The child hears the parents devoutly utter them, and his thought passes from the lower parentage, taking the hint and suggestion of the father and mother to lift before itself the higher fatherhood. This is the most blessed conception the child can take of God, and the greater love of heaven, and the better household.

"Hallowed be thy name."

Once brought into the divine presence, the soul's first outburst is such as an absent child speaks. Do you know what it is to be homesick? Were you ever sent away from home when small, as I was? Do you remember what it was to remain and count the weeks and days and hours? Do you recollect how you could not sleep the night before you were to start for home; and how you could not eat your breakfast; how when the stage was waiting for you the excitement took away all your appetite; and how as you rolled over the journey you thought you would surprise the family when you got home; how, when at last you got there, you thought of some little device by which you would take them by surprise, but how, when you rushed into the house, all you could do was to throw your arms about your mother's neck, and cry, and say, "Oh! dear mother!"

That is the generous way in which the child's heart pours itself out. This is an illustration of the current, the gush, the enthusiasm, of that love which children feel. The child's love goes out to meet the parent's love, as the most beautiful, the dearest, the most sacred, the most holy thing; and for the moment love worships love.

This I suppose to be the interpretation of *Hallowed be thy name.* As it were, the soul opens its arms, and throws them around the Father in heaven, and says, "O Lord and Father! sacred and holy be thy name." It is the impulse of one who wants the Father to be most beloved, glorious, beautiful, and sacred, not only to himself, but to all.

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

These petitions are one. The Kingdom of God is a kingdom of love, of joy, of peace. The law of God is that which produces order, truth, equity, and so love, peace, good-will; and these petitions come

from the aspirations of the heart for that more perfect state, in itself and throughout the universe, in which God himself dwells. It is as if the child saw how beautiful was the palace of his Father God, and longed that the same beautiful and blessed estate should be universal, and that it should be to others, as to him, that kingdom in which dwelleth righteousness.

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

That is the law of joy in all the universal realm.

Thus far the Prayer respects things beyond our own personal interest. Now we are permitted, as it were, to make mention of our private want.

"Give us this day our daily bread."

This is a recognition of divine providence. It is a recognition of that care for our sustenance which in the fatherly government of God is continually going on.

"Give us this day our daily bread."

You will never know what that means, probably. Where it was first uttered, in a majority of the instances of those that heard it, it was a question, every day, where they were to get the sustenance of that day. They lived within a handbreadth of starvation. They had no stores. They had laid up nothing in advance. They had no wealth. Their food, at best, was but a handful of grain. It was very slender compared with our table bounties. They lived all the time in intimacy with famine. And when Christ taught them to say to God,

"Give us this day our daily bread,"

he touched a chord that was always vibrating in their hearts. By faith, it brought them, in respect to the want which nature presses most closely upon men, into direct connection with the sovereign providence of God in the affairs of this world. It reminds one of that other passage, where our Saviour said,

"Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

This is not inconsistent with the petition,

"Give us this day our daily bread."

It is not a prayer of anxiety. It is a prayer of confidence in the divine providence of God and recognition of it.

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

Here the heart recognizes its own inferiority and imperfection and sinfulness. It also recognizes, when it asks forgiveness, that it is itself in a forgiving mood.

"And lead us not into temptation."

Suffer us not to be led into temptation, is the meaning of that passage. No man knows what he will do when he is tempted, nor what he will undo.

"But deliver us from evil.'

Now, although this prayer is so simple, yet when we come to look into these various petitions, I think we shall see that scarcely anything can be asked in this world that may not be appropriately gathered under one or other of these various heads. There is no extent of experience, and no want, that may not properly be considered as but an enlargement of one or other of these petitions. This is more nearly, therefore, a universal prayer, than any other prayer that was ever framed. It is among the shortest, and yet among the most comprehensive and suggestive.

There is infinite latitude allowed under it. We are not to shut ourselves up simply to the repetition of these phrases.

Our view of the communion of the soul with God; that fellowship which we have with God; the interchange of thought and sympathy which the refined Christian heart loves to take with God—all these come appropriately under that head. All the desires of a man for worldly good may appropriately be brought under the head, *Give us this day our daily bread.* All the fears men have, come in under the head, *Lead us not into temptation. Deliver us from evil.* All the things that you need for yourself, or for your children, traced back, are found, in their initial forms, in this Lord's Prayer. This is a birthright prayer, belonging to every man. A gate, it is, through which every living soul may pass. Each petition is a separate gate. And beyond is an infinite variety of blessed things. These gates open, as it were, into a garden where are growing fruits and flowers in wonderful profusion. Endless diversities of things are there; and all of them are appropriate to the utterance of this prayer.

Are we to repeat it in the form in which it was given, and in that form only? The Saviour says that we are to pray *after this manner.* His words were, not, *This prayer pray ye*, but, *After this manner pray ye.*

Who may pray it? Every one. May the pirate pray it, on his bloody deck? If he can, he may. May the murderer pray it, while the noose is yet swinging and waiting for his neck? If he desires to, he may. May the reeling debauchee, returning from his night's excess, and wearied and jaded and depressed, pray it? If he has a heart to, he may. May the man who has been overcome again and again and again by the temptation of the world, who still is standing in the presence of his conqueror (the sin that doth so easily beset him), and who is ashamed that he is so often carried away—may he, with a full consciousness of his wickedness and insincerity, and broken promises, and worthless life, and sinful heart, pray? If

he desires to, he may. May a man before he is converted call God Father? There is only one condition that stands between you and your calling God Father, and that is, that, being a sinner, you have not a real desire to be released from your sins. If you love sin, if you love wickedness, and you use the Lord's prayer to parry judgments with, then I forewarn you. Let it alone. Touch it not. But the mere circumstance of being a sinner does not disqualify one from praying to God. Is not the sacrifice of the wicked an abomination to God? Yes. If a man tries to garnish his wickedness by sacrifice, and he thinks sacrifice is an atonement for that wickedness, and that after sacrifice he may go on with plenary indulgence again, then it is an abomination to God. But to interpret it so that a man may not pray until he is converted, is to shut out the universe. If God made provision for wicked men, who are they that may not find succor and help by praying to him? May not my son, who, little by little, has been weakened, and has gone down, step by step, and has fallen into the nets of gamblers and drinkers, and has come to poverty, and through years and years of degradation has separated himself from me, until sickness overtakes him—when then, in his wretchedness, he has fevered dreams of his home, and of me, may he not call out, "O, my father"? May he not invoke his mother until he has been restored to health, and to his right mind, and until he comes back to his father's house as good as he went away? May he not, in his low and suffering condition, ask help and pity of his father and mother? When does your heart most need the healing of another heart, but when it is wickedest and worst? In that infirmity which sin brings; in that prostration of moral power which tends to wrong-doing—there is where a man most needs God's pity and God's mercy. Is that the time that a man's mouth shall be shut, and he shall not say, "O God, my Father, help me"? Is prayer the privilege of Christians, and not the privilege of men who are not Christians? Is it the privilege of those who have been brought into the light of faith, and not the privilege of those who have not made proof of faith, and are afar off from it?

Wherever there is a man who feels the sting of sin, and would have release, he has a right to say, "O, Father, help me!" Wherever there is a man who is conscious that he has done wrong again and again and again, and that in his own strength he never can stand, and that he needs help, he has a right to ask for it. "I am lost in sin; I have no strength to rescue myself; thou art God; save me!"—that is an argument which knocks louder at the bosom of God than any battle-ax at the gate of any castle on earth.

If any man feels that he is so weak that he cannot sustain him-

self, there is strength for him if he will ask it; and he has a right to ask it, though his name is on no church book. And though men condemn you, God forgives you. If your father and mother forget you, the Lord will take you up. If your friends and neighbors cast you off, God will not forsake you. So long as you have life, so long as you know enough to want to be better than you are, no matter what your antecedents have been, you have a right to go to God, and say, "Our Father."

This prayer, with its hope and cheer, and with its associations, must at times come most bitterly to many and many a wanderer. Ye that have been across the deep; ye that in foreign lands have left behind you, not only the form of your parents, but almost every memory of them; ye that have forsaken the paths of belief, and have grown worldly, and become hoary in worldliness, and have forgotten the God of your father and mother, are there not times when, as you behold little children kneeling before their mother, with innocent face and upturned eyes, and learning to repeat, with broken language, and sweet simplicity, this Prayer—are there not such times when a chord of memory is struck in your hearts? How different were you when you knelt at your mother's knee and repeated that Prayer! Do you not remember it? And in the old, brown house, over which the elms used to swing their branches, storm-tossed, do you not remember how you repeated unwittingly these strange sentences, looking askance here and there in an unconscious, half roguery? Do you not remember the evening song! Do you not remember the parting kiss as you retired to rest? And in the night, when some fear seized you, do you not remember the hasty presence of your watching mother? She is dead. She died in the faith of the Saviour. She has gone home. It may be that she has been your guardian angel. You have gone far from her precepts. You have forsaken the guide of your youth. You have become hard-hearted and worldly-minded. Oh, sadly wandering man! does not the thought of your childhood sometimes come back to you with overpowering freshness? At times you used to recite with unwonted fervor this matchless prayer of the Saviour, given for all mankind, and for you. It once was familiar to you. And does it not draw you back with powerful memories and associations to the blessed and innocent days of your youth? When you think of what you were, and what you meant to be, and what you are, does it never give a pang to your heart, and do you not wish that you could now be of the same faith and the same hope that your parents were? Do you not wish that you were joined with them, in simplicity, in purity, and in fervent piety, to God?

And are there not some prayerless souls here to-night who will be tempted to come back? Are there not some of you who, though you have not taken the name of God upon your lips for years, except for profane purposes, will go down on your knees before you sleep, and repeat once more, solemnly, tenderly, yearningly, the Lord's Prayer? And then, when the morrow comes, I beg you to pray, "Lead me not into temptation. Deliver me this day from evil." And gently, even by so small a thing as this, you may be led, step by step, until the whole way of prayer shall become familiar to your feet. And then, when life departs, no longer afar off, not knowing what to pray for as you ought, you shall stand and see your God face to face, and find that his fatherhood is sweeter, and larger, and more real and rich than it has entered into the heart of man to conceive.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return ye children of men. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday, when it is past, and as a watch in the night. O thou that changest not, that art the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, under thy wings we would put ourselves and be secure. How feeble is our strength! How are we crushed as before the moth! How is our wisdom but as the twilight! How often are our desires, at their best estate, leading us to destruction! How are our plans brought to desolation as in a moment. We look out upon life and see how generations come and thrive, and pass, and perish, that others may make the long and repeated experiment of ignorance, and weakness, and temptation, and sin, and sorrow, and sighing, and death. And still creation travails, burdened, groaning in pain until now. O thou Deliverer! when wilt thou appear? When shall come the new heaven and the new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness? When shall men be lifted up from their degradation? It is not enough that we are born into happiness and secure. Are not all races our fellows, and our brethren? How can we be content that the decrees of God's mercy are fulfilled toward us, when we look out upon the uncounted millions of men that have no God but idols, no knowledge but of things degrading, and no hope but in things base and low? O thou that art the Father of man, what hast thou done for thine household upon earth? How are thy children scattered to the uttermost portions thereof! Thou hast promised to redeem the world; hast thou forgotten to be gracious? Thou hast promised that yet the whole earth shall see thy salvation; where is the blessed age in which there shall be this fulfillment? We beseech of thee that thou wilt strengthen our faith. Our hope is in thee. Heaven is the strength and the wisdom of the human; and little do we derive of comfort, or courage, or hope from the sight of our eyes. Thou, in thine infinite resources of power, art strong; but stronger art thou in thy love and sympathy. Thou art stronger than the ages, or than all the races of men. And we believe in thee, though we cannot believe in the things which we look upon,

nor solve the natures that are in them, nor reconcile the thousand doubts that come to afflict us. We believe in thee, in thy wisdom, in thy government, in thy power to subdue all things to thyself, and in the final glory of thine administration, when thou shalt acquit thyself before all creatures, and rise triumphant over the conflicts of ages, and morality shall prevail, and joy and happiness fill up the measure that now sorrow and sighing fill.

O Lord, our God, come quickly. The whole earth doth wait for thee. We are glad for so many as have escaped from off the face of the earth. Their faces are seen here no more; but their voices are heard in heaven, and their blessed hearts are there, and there their joys abound. In that great household where none are lost, we have our little children. They are angel-attended. They walk forth radiant in thy realm of light and beauty. Those that once bore sin, and sorrow, and temptation with us are now gone to heaven. The hands that taught our hands are there. The hearts from whom our hearts learned to love are with thee. A great company, a growing church, every day increasing, there is on high, of those who have been our companions on the earth. Grant that we may have patience to wait until our time comes; until we are permitted to come out of the winter into the daylight, the noon-day glory, of the sunless land.

O Lord our God, we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that we may take courage from the victories of those who have gone before, and hold on a little longer in the midst of trials, and under temptations. When our faith fails, may we still have the light of thy countenance, and the joy of thy salvation.

And now, wilt thou grant, we beseech of thee, thy blessing to-night upon all waiting souls in thy presence. Listen to the heart's aspirations of prayer. Hear all those who make their complaints before thee. Hear all that mourn. Be near to all that pray. Regard the petitions which they most need to have answered, rather than those which they most vehemently urge. By thy wisdom overrule their wisdom. We pray that thy will may be done, and not our own. Guide us so long as we shall live. And when, at last, we come to the valley, of the shadow of death, may they that look down into it, when their sight fails to follow us, hear our voices rejoicing as we go forward, victorious, up on the other side. And then we will give the praise of our salvation to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word spoken; and grant that it may rest on many hearts as the dew rests upon the flower, or as the rain falls upon the ground. We beseech of thee that thou wilt fructify thy word. Make it bring forth a hundred-fold. Deliver us, we pray thee, from lives that have in them no prayer. Deliver us from hearts that do not desire God. May our weak and spent hearts be strengthened, and refilled from the bounty and grandeur of thine. Lead *us* not into temptation. Deliver *us* from evil. And so, O Lord, we pray that in *our* hearts thy kingdom may come, and that in *our* lives thy will may be done. Our Father, take care of us in this life, and bring us to the other. And to thy name shall be the praise and the glory. *Amen.*

REMNANTS.

"A remnant shall be saved."—Rom. IX., 27.

The whole passage is this:

"Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved."

This reference to Esaias interprets the use of this peculiar phrase, *a remnant*. There is something very pathetic in its use in the Old Testament. There never was a great people who had stronger national attachments, or a stronger love for home and their native country, than the Jews. It was a part of that economy under which they were brought up, to beget this intense local attachment, and this fidelity to the ideas which belonged to the old Hebrew commonwealth. And yet they lay between the great neighboring nations very much as wheat lies between the upper and lower millstones, and spent most of their historic life in being ground. They were bruised on the one side and on the other. Sometimes it was Damascus; sometimes it was Babylon; sometimes it was Egypt; sometimes the Romans, and sometimes the Greeks. Somebody was at them pretty much all the time. Nor was it enough that they were made very wretched at home; it was the custom to take them up and carry them away. By successive depredations the land was completely emptied. For instance, the central region of Palestine, which afterward was called Samaria, was so totally emptied of its original population, and another heathen population had so filled it, that for generations, probably, there was not a drop of Jewish blood in the veins of the settlers there. Afterward there was a scattering of the Jews among them; these intermarried with them; and so the races became mixed.

In these circumstances, it frequently happened that those who remained in the land at the south were but a handful, compared with the whole nation before the ten tribes were broken off and dispersed. When all the tribes were there in their might, they were a great and valiant people. There was not then, and I think there is not now, such a stock on the face of the earth as the Jewish, for

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power, continuity, and various genius. It is in them yet. And it is a testimony to the force of moral training—for it was that which made them a great people. But when by the fate of war all but Judæa was swept away captive, it seemed to them that a mere remnant or fragment was left. Then they went, too; and a great many of their people perished on the way. Of those that went to Babylon, a great many were morally weak, and fell into the heathen habits, and lost the integrity of their fathers.

Yet there was always, even there, not a large number but a band of men who would not give up their faith, and who clung to each other. They were a remnant, though they were in captivity. And by and by, when the royal heart happened to be benignant and they got permission to return to their land, they went back, a miserable company of pilgrims, a few hundreds or thousands of people, to build again their cities and villages—especially to rebuild Jerusalem, the dearest, the most precious place to them on earth. They were but a remnant, yet they were full of courage, full of hope, full of energy; though so many exigencies had met them; though they had gone through so many sharp places; though so many times it seemed as if they were about to have their national life absolutely crushed out. And this remnant which was left became a seed planted again; and the nation throve afterward. And so that term *remnant* became a very striking term. It was full of associations connected with their affections and their national experiences. And when you turn to the Old Testament, you will find, all the way through, reference to these remnants.

"O Lord! save thy people, the *remnant* of Israel." "Pray for us to the Lord, even for all this *remnant* of the people," "Lord, wilt thou make an end of the *remnant?*" "Wilt thou make a full end of the *remnant* of Israel?" "It may be that the Lord God of Hosts will be gracious unto the *remnant* of Joseph." "Lift up thy prayer for the *remnant* that are left." "A *remnant* shall be saved."

I could quote a score of passages not dissimilar to these.

What is a remnant? It is what is left over after all uses have been fulfilled. In manufacturing, it is after you have taken everything that is good and useful, and left just as little as you can. It is the clippings and the parings; the core and the skin; the edges, the fringes of things; the scraps; the odds and ends. With a great many things, the remnants, as in working gold and silver, are just as precious as any other part, because they can be resmelted. But with a great many things it is not so. It is not so with cloth. It is not so with wood. It is not so with a variety of metallic substances. There are many things the remnants of which are comparatively useless. They certainly cannot answer the

purpose which was served by the great body to which they belonged, although they may be turned aside to some inferior use, or dropped down to some inferior place.

But there is another way in which the word *remnant* is used in ordinary life. It may be applied to the result, the final condition to which things come by long usage. It sometimes has reference to the state of being worn out. Thus there are ships that are mere hulks, remnants, because they have gone through their allotted period. They are good to be broken up for firewood; or, it may be that they are good to be anchored at home as receiving-ships, to make miserable men more miserable in. They are simply remnants of what they were. There are machines that are worn out, and are scarcely fit to be melted over again, and are not fit for the purposes for which they were builded, and are thrown into a corner, or under an old shed. And there they lie, remnants of what they were. So there are remnants of flocks, and remnants of herds—the poor, the scabby, the sick, the maimed, the good-for-nothing, comparatively. There are also remnants of harvests, remnants of farming utensils, and remnants of wagons. There are remnants of all manner of things that men have had the use of, but that have passed their day, and are, comparatively speaking, of no value.

Men almost always think the time will come when they will use these things; but it never comes. They accumulate on our hands. Our garrets and attics are full of good-for-somethings which have had their day. Old chairs and sofas are stowed away which we think we shall have fixed and bring down; but we never do. There are bedsteads laid aside, antique and queer. There are all sorts of utensils and various scraps of things that have been useful, but that are no longer so. They are too good to throw away, and they are too poor to keep. They hover in a miserable existence half way between something and nothing.

Is there no parallel, no analogy, between remnants in goods, remnants in machines, and remnants as applying to man's life in society? Oh yes, a great deal. We may speak, for instance, of the remnant of an army after a great defeat. We speak of the remnants of tribes; as, for instance, the tribe of Benjamin, when for their guilty wickedness they had been well-nigh exterminated. We may see remnants of tribes among our American Indians. There may be a remnant of nations; Poland is such a remnant.

So *remnant* conveys, in all cases, an idea of comparative usefulness in human life and human organizations; or else an idea of weakness and danger; or an idea of liability to be swept away as rubbish; or an idea of being too much reduced, or circumscribed, or cut

into, to be of any consequence. In this sense the term is used with reference to human beings as well as with reference to property.

Let us now apply this phrase to secular life. *The remnant*, in general, means those who are cast aside in the great conflict of human life. And how great a treasury there is of remnants—that is, those who seem to have got through their function long before they have finished their life! How many young there are who are good for nothing! How many grown people there are who seem to have got through their period of usefulness, though they are not midway in life. There are many who are remnants by reason of their breaking down in health. There is for them no more vigor; no more elasticity of spirit; no more enterprise; no more power to drive through projected plans. They are not able to go out of the harbor. They are not sea-worthy.

Everybody that is sick is not a remnant necessarily, in any painful sense of the term. A man may be, on the other hand, a greater blessing when he is sick than when he is well. God's angels do not always appear when we are in the full flush of physical health.

Where sickness is not our own fault; where it does not come as a testimony to our crimes; where it is the sickness of one like Florence Nightingale, who lingers through months and through years, with hardly vitality enough to hold soul and body together, having worn out her noble life in the service of humanity, we should never apply the term *remnant* in the unfavorable sense. Where in the household the child is passing quietly and steadily away, how often is the sick room the joy and the peace of the whole house! How often are the venerable and the enfeebled the richest, although their life is over, and they are waiting for the last summons! A person may be broken down in health, and yet his counsel and example may be unspeakably beneficial. It is possible for men to do their life-work by their activity; but there are some men who, having done their life-work, seem to be ordained of God to stand still and shine. They are at peace with God. Their nature is harmonized. They are full of benignity toward their fellow-men. And oftentimes the two leaves of the gate of heaven in the household, are the old arm-chair and the cradle. Both the child and the aged person are helpless; but, though neither of them can do anything, and they have to be helped every day, and every hour of every day, yet they may be blessings of joy and peace in the household. Heaven's richest gifts may descend upon the other members of the family through their example or mediation.

There may be remnants from other causes: as where men have spent their forces as a fool spends his patrimony; as where men

have hastily run through, for their selfish gratification, the capital of life ; as where one has gained nothing worth gaining, and lost all that was worth keeping, and is disgraced in body and mind, and thrown out for others' sustenance. These are remnants with a vengeance. How many there are of them ! Society is full of them. They are here and there and everywhere.

Many are remnants in life from the loss of their property. There are men who begin well, and have a certain force up to mid-life, but who then in a convulsion, owing to some mistake, or by a process of slow decline, become bankrupt ; and the remainder of whose life is as naught. They are not unvirtuous, frequently, but are mild and excellent people ; yet the rest of their life is spent in feeble and ineffectual endeavors to reinstate themselves. And from year to year they have less and less power ; from year to year there is less and less substance to them ; from year to year they are less and less able to lean on themselves, and they lean heavier and heavier on others. And before they are sixty years of age they are absolutely dependent, requiring perpetually to be upheld. There are good people, kind people, people not bad in any sense of the term, who are utterly helpless. How full the world is of them !

It is an old proverb, that "it is hard to make an empty bag stand straight" ; and there is nothing so feeble as people who have lost all power to take care of themselves. They are often spoken of as if their feebleness was not itself a misfortune ; as if the loss, by the processes of life, of the vim on which largely depends their physical organization, was not a part of their troubles. Did you never see a great, strong, burly man, full of health, full of blood, with a big heart, and good digestion, making bones like flint and muscles like steel wire ; did you never see a man full of fire and indomitable energy, made, as it were, out of leather and iron—did you never see such a man look with pity and contempt on these miserable, shiftless, ne'er-do-wells, and say, "Why do not they do as I do ? Why did not the Lord keep them as he made them ?" Men with superior prerogatives and gifts are apt to domineer over others that are unfortunate. And it is those who have the power to plan and execute that we admire. We meet these healthy robust men on the street, we do business with them, and we come to respect them because of their energy and executiveness. It is the tool which cuts that we prefer and wish to keep ; and the tool that loses its edge the quickest we throw away first. And we come to use men as tools. It is the man that cuts and has the enduring edge, on whom we bestow the highest commendation. We praise the strong and prosperous, and pity the weak and feeble.

When a man is, by misfortunes of business, brought to a stand-still, and thrown out of the whirl of creative industry it is possible that he will become merely a fragment, a remnant; but if he be largely endowed, if there be something to his manhood, he will not.

There is a fish called a *sculpin.* Nine-tenths of it are mouth, and one-tenth body, as I recollect it when a boy. Its chief business, apparently, consists in eating everything. And after it has eaten, nothing comes of it. It has a big tail, to propel itself with, a big head, a big mouth, and a very active stomach with which to do the work of digestion quickly. It is a do-nothing, gormandizing fish.

There are many men who are said to have the power of making wealth. They have. And they are *sculpin* men. They have an enormous maw, which they open and shut quick and often, devouring all that comes in their way. Nobody can surpass them in acquiring property. But what purpose does this wealth serve? Do they use it as a means for benefiting society? Is it employed as a sword with which to defend the weak? Is it an architect that builds? Is it a seed-sower that distributes? Or, is this quality merely the capacity to take in—to ingurgitate, *ingurgitate*, INGURGITATE? If so, then when misfortune comes, and a man loses all his wealth, what is left of him? Nothing—literally nothing. And you shall find that while some men, being bankrupt, lose almost nothing, other men, going into bankruptcy, come out with nothing. There is very little manhood in them aside from this peculiar genius or talent to amass property. They are not fertile in ideas. They are not richly endowed with sentiment. They are not distributors of happiness. They are not even reflectors of happiness. They certainly are not creators of it. They have very little power among men. As organizers of wealth they have some power, but not as organizers of thoughts and purposes. And when they are stripped of their property they become, most emphatically, *remnants.*

When one of a great nature is clothed in wealth, he is certainly more powerful; but if the raiment of wealth be taken from him, he is not less. He still has a great nature.

There can be no doubt (though there have been disputes among archæologists on the subject) that the Greeks colored and gilded the statues which adorned their temples. And undoubtedly those statues were more magnificent for being colored and gilded. But now that time has rubbed off the paint, and they are without a particle of embellishment, and are simple marble statues, they are exquisite still.

That is the case with a man whose force lies in his essential good-

ness and real manliness. Wealth may make him more beautiful; but strip him of wealth, and he does not lose anything. The man is there yet. No man can be called a remnant, though he be thrown out of life, if he retain in him the essential power of true manhood. But, oh! how many there have been who, when they lost their wealth, lost everything; and now chatter and talk, mostly repining. It was not always so, they say. They have seen better days. They remember the time when they had as much as the greatest; but they have lost it all. And since that was all they had, there is nothing left. Therefore they are remnants.

How many men are there who are thrown out of life from discouragements! They discover mistakes in their habits when it is too late to change them. I am always sorry to see anybody give up. I do not know that when a man fails at fifty or sixty years of age he can succeed again in the same path in which he formerly succeeded; but it seems to me that no man, in any circumstances, should say, in the spirit of discouragement, "It is no use for me to put forth exertion any longer." Just so long as a man has life and power to move he ought to keep laboring in some proper vocation, with some suitable ambition, and trust in divine providence. Yet how many persons there are in life who have reasonably good character and morals, but who are without any particular force, and who, after fighting battles here and there, at last give up in despair!

I sat in the window of my cottage in November, after the leaves had began to fall to the ground, and saw the wind deal with them. In the summer when the wind blew the leaves sang. But the time came when they had lost their hold on the tree and dropped. And now, when the wind blew, the leaves no longer made melody in their motion. Before, when the wind came, they hung sweet and succulent and green on the tree, but now they whirled in wreaths past the house, some falling into a little depression; some nestling by the side of the fence; some falling under a bank; some along the hedge. Brown, sapless, withered leaves, they were, good for nothing except to make soil for another year.

I have seen a great many men in life that were wind-blown; and they held on to the stalk and the branch; and all the wind could do was to make them sing; but now I see that they are broken off from the tree. It is November with them; and the wind catches them, and whirls them away, and some land in poor-houses, and some in hospitals, and some in private dwellings, where they pick up chips, or do some other inferior service. They are remnants of life. And it is a very great sadness.

There is one thing that will not bear looking into, unless a man has a heart of philosophy, (which is a heart of stone;) and that is

human life. You can look at the condition of men; at the question of joy or unjoyfulness; at the subject of prosperity, or want of prosperity; you can look from house to house, in your own circle, perhaps, and among your own set, where everything is bright and cheerful, without having your feelings shocked or hurt. But go down among those that are poor and unfortunate and cast out; see how full life is of broken-down men, and discouraged men, and unprosperous men; go down, and down, and down, and still down to the bottom, and tell me if it is not sad. When a man's heart is moved with love for his fellows; when he counts every man his brother; when he looks at everything in the light of Christian charity, the saddest thing to look into is the structure of the lower half of human society: not that part where men are all like germs that point upward, and break through, and find the sun, and blossom; but that other part, where men are going down from the top toward the bottom, where the remnants are. Some portions of society are more than knee-deep, are *neck*-deep, with mere shattered remnants of men.

What vast multitudes of men there are who add nothing either to the moral, the social, or the material forces of society! They consume continually, but contribute nothing. What numbers of men there are in regard to whom society would feel itself benefitted if they were dead, and it was rid of them!

It is not all the no-workers that society can afford to lose. Neither is it all the weak that society can afford to lose. The weakest things in the world are the most precious—the children. The joy of the house, the comfort of the heart, the music of life, the very prophet to us, is the child.

"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."

Children are God's messengers to us. They are the blossoms of human life. We could not spare them, babes though they be. They do not earn anything. They do not know how to sing or frolic. We could not spare even the new-born babe—the babe of a week. It is in every way crude. It is utterly unreciprocating. It is a mere germ-point, waiting for food, in our arms. And yet, how rich we are! How rich are our homes! And how it stirs, with its magnetism, every thought and feeling of the sensitive soul, and brings near the other life, and lifts us up, every day, in hymns and prayers and thanksgiving to God! How much we have to thank God for in the child! and yet how little, so far as the present value of the child is concerned!

It is not the weak that cumber society; and yet society is like a ship that is overloaded with trash. It is weighed down with men who are good for nothing—men who, instead of adding to the hap-

piness of other people, more or less absorb the happiness of others. It is a sorrowful thing to think of, that when some fellow-creatures die, other people breathe freer.

For their sakes, I have been glad that some persons died. When one must go, I have prayed, "Let the struggle be cut short, O God of mercy! and let them fly away." But there are many others whom society would fain have taken away for its own sake. They are useless to themselves and to others. They are in the way. Nobody wants them. They are trash. They are a nuisance. When they die, people feel a gladness that they are gone which decency will not allow them to express.

It is a sad thing that anybody should live in this world whom nobody wants to follow to the grave. It is a sad thing for me to go to Greenwood and walk through the strangers' burying-ground. It is a sad thing for one to die and have nobody think about him afterward, except to thank God that he is out of the way. It is sad to witness the burying of such a one, and see no mourning and sympathizing group standing by, and seeing the workmen unfeelingly pitch the clods upon the coffin, and hurriedly fill up the grave, apparently with no more thought or feeling than if it had not been a human being.

But if it be a child of respectable or wealthy parents, the grave is surrounded by a large company of relatives and friends, assembled to pay their last respects to the dead. And how gently is the coffin lowered to its place! How do the men regard the feelings of the bereaved ones! How careful are they to prevent the falling of stones harshly upon the lid! Everything is done in a decorous and sympathetic manner, so that nothing shall wound the afflicted ears or eyes.

It is an awful thing for a man to go out of life uncared for, or followed by the rejoicings of those who have long wished to be rid of him. It is an awful thing for a man to have lived so that he goes out of life unhonored and unregretted. There is an inhumanity in it. There is something in it which touches my soul to the very quick.

And yet, I cannot deny that there are hundreds, yes, thousands of persons, in this very city of Brooklyn (and I suppose many of them have walked by this house, and looked in at this door) who, if they were to die and be buried to-morrow, would not have a tear shed for them, and would leave the community better off for their going. What kind of a life is that, brethren, lived by a person who can better be spared from society than retained in it? What kind of a result is it of all the ministrations which are instituted

for his benefit, and all the advantages for growth and improvement which are showered upon him from every direction? Is there anything more sad than to see a man enjoy the plenitude of God's mercy in this world, and then die worse than the lower animals which have no such mental and moral endowments as he possesses?

Now, in regard to these remnants that go away from among us, there is this cheering thought, that though they have made a total wreck of their life here, it may, at least, have proved a seed.

I am not sorry when my corn is cut down in autumn. It is one of the most beautiful of crops. There is no more pleasing sight in the world, I think, than a field of Indian maize. Yet, when it begins to wither, to shrink up, and the wind makes harsh whistlings through it, I do not feel badly. Why? Because the ear is there, and it is ripe, and I have my grain. And if I want to, I can plant it again the next spring, and have another harvest the next autumn.

And when a man is all withered and shrunk, and dies out of the refuse heap of life, if I am sure that the corn is in him, and that in the other life it will be planted again, and will spring up, and grow and ripen, then there is no occasion for me to feel badly. And I fain would hope that it is so with a great many.

I cannot bear to think that the poor, miserable, unenlightened slaves, that groped in darkness on the plantation, knew almost nothing and were not permitted to learn anything, lived a life of toil like beasts and crept to their hovel at night scarcely able to get there, and were dragged out again early in the morning, until at last they died—I cannot bear to think that they never have another chance. I believe they do have a better chance than they had here, cursed, as they were, with a human master. If here men are children of ignorance, and if they have had no opportunity for growth in manhood on earth, I fain would believe that God will have some remedial plan of mercy for them; but when a man has lived in the full blaze of Gospel light, and has thrown away every opportunity for the development of his moral and spiritual nature, I do not believe there is any new chance for him He has had his chance, and has not improved it.

It matters not that a man has had any amount of misfortune here, if, once escaping from this life, he lands bravely and safely and strongly on the shore of immortality, and is a man there in Christ Jesus. What do you suppose a ransomed soul in the spirit-world cares for all the winds that once blew upon him on earth? Blessed is it to become a wreck, if angels are the wreckers, and you are gathered up into life and immortality!

Those of you who are familiar with Western scenery, know that

you can ride through a long forest, and then come to a clearing. And while there will be an orchard here, there will be a belt of forest around the little square opening; and there will stand in the midst of it gaunt, branchless, girdled trees. The settler takes his ax, at the right period of the year, and goes round and chops, just above the swell of the roots, a ring which stops the flow of the sap. The tree does not fall down immediately. During the first year it holds its branches and leaves. But there is no return of the leaf to it. Then the weather beats upon it. And every successive year it stands with fewer and fewer branches. And at last some morning, after a great storm, it lies its whole length upon the ground.

Brethren, I see many men standing like trees, branchless and gaunt in a clearing, girdled apparently. They are waiting for their overthrow. And it grieves my heart to see great natures, vast trunks, towering up, spreading abroad their branches, fit to have been pillars in the Temple of God, but girdled, and dead in trespasses and in sins.

Oh, that from among such there might be a remnant that yet should be saved! Oh, that there might be among those who have lived through twenty years under my ministry here, and who have been good friends and neighbors, and whose lives have been rich, often, with special offices of kindness, would treat my Saviour as well as they treat me!

How piteous it is to see the remnants of a family! The father and the mother lived Christian lives, and have gone to heaven. One by one the brothers and sisters were gathered into the fold of Christ. But for some reason one single one stood out. Perhaps he became wedded to the world. Perhaps he got into bad company Perhaps he maintained outward morality. At any rate, he seems, from one or another cause, to have resisted every religious influence.

Is there not in my hearing some person who is saying, "That is I. Every member of my father's family except me is a Christian"? Is there not some one present who says, "My brothers and sisters have died and gone to heaven; but I am not on the same road which they traveled"? Are there not persons here who are the last remnants of glorious households, and who are not saved? Oh! shall not even these remnants be gathered in?

Go back and think of the boyhood circle that used to play baseball with you on the village green! One became a drunkard; another went to prison; another made shipwreck of himself in business; another went to the city and prospered. They are all gone, but you and two or three others who are left, and are remnants. Where

are the boys that used to sit in the same class with you? I count up my school-fellows every year; and every year it takes less figures. The numbers are running thin.

One of the most extraordinary scenes that I recollect took place right here. An old man, during my father's lifetime, came trembling up to the platform, and said to me, "Your father and I were classmates, and beside him and me there is but one of our class left, and he is dying. When your father dies, let me know, will you? for I shall be the only one remaining." He took it for granted that he would outlive my father. He did; but now he is gone, too. There is not even a remnant of that class. They have all passed away. And how many circles your mind forms when you come to think of them, of which but a remnant—one or two, are left!

Now, the question which it seems to me every man should put to himself, is this: "Is the circle to which I belong a divided circle? Are a part here, and a part there?" Have you the same hope that sustained the others in dying. Have you the same triumphant faith which they had? They have all gone, you are the last, and you must soon follow them; and you have no comfort, and no joy, and no hope. They all trod a triumphant way which you never put your foot into. They have gone before, and you are not following.

It is a terrible thing to be a remnant—to be the last child in a family—and not go to heaven where the rest have gone; or to be the last member of a circle of Christians, and not to be a Christian. It is a terrible thing to be the only one left of a company, and be lingering and waiting, soon to go, they saved, and you lost.

There are many in every congregation, who, looking upon them from the point of congregational association, are but remnants. In every prominent congregation, there are those who live through a vast amount of influence, seeming to be unchanged.

I remember very well that toward the close of my pastorate in Indiana, I sat one Sabbath day and looked over the congregation. It was a small one. Before I came here, I never preached to a congregation that averaged more than two hundred, or two hundred and fifty. I could count all the men in the congregation who were not hopefully Christian. There were about fifteen. To my certain knowledge, they had gone through four or five revivals of religion during my day, there; and I had labored with them as a brother would with a brother. I had plied them, and preached at them, and prayed for them, and approached them on every side, and made use of every means at my command, and studied them, and at times they seemed about to come into the kingdom; yet they remained as they were, unregenerated. I knew the after history of about

one half of them, and I think that none of them ever became Christians. A considerable proportion of them died in a way which precludes the hope of any spiritual change. And those that were left were the remnant of that congregation. Everything, apparently, had been used. The material had been wrought up close. Here were, so to speak, the clippings, the remains that were unusable.

In every congregation that has been sitting under the ministration of the sanctuary for any considerable time, there are many that must be called remnants. There are men in this congregation—men to whom I have no further message; men whose understanding I know I have reached over and over again, but whose susceptibilities have not been awakened, and who have been able to resist moral influence, to maintain their life of this world, and keep away from the love of God, and live for time, and not for eternity. All that conversation could do, and all that preaching could do, and all that divine influence in the outpouring of God's spirit could do, seems to have been in vain as far as they are concerned, and there they stand.

This leads me to the single other view that I shall take of this subject; and that is of the remnant of *life*, looked at from a religious standpoint. It may well be applied with very great seriousness and very great profitableness in this direction. We are responsible to God for our talents, for our character, and for our conduct, here below; and there are a great many persons who have run through their career of evil on earth, until their end is near, and there is but a remnant left. There are men who have run through their career of drinking until they are at the very last period of their life. There are a great many who have run through their career of sensual indulgence until their strength is gone, and their stamina is taken out of them, and they have come to their last period of earthly existence. There are a great many who have by various infractions of known laws, by pushing animal excess to the uttermost extreme, wasted their life, and come to the last part of their career. In all probability they cannot live five years more. Many of them will not live one year. With some it is a question of months.

Is there any use of preaching the Gospel to such men? Yes. A man may have sinned against every organ of his body; he may have sinned against the laws of nature (and no man can break the laws of nature and not break the moral laws of the universe); he may have sinned against his light and knowledge; and he may have come to his very last hours; and yet there is hope for him. There are many fearful presumptions against him; but, after all, there is hope enough to justify prayer for him, and efforts to save him. If there is a person in this congregation who thinks he is such a one,

his condition justifies prayer, and labor, and the most vehement urgency, that the remnant of his career may be saved, that his last hours may yet be redeemed, and that a faint light from the very closing period may be cast back upon the darkness of all that has gone before.

There are a great many who have gone through prosperity in this world, and have come very near to the end of their career. Their life has not been marked by vice; but they have lived for the ordinary aims; for the pride of life; for the events of time. They have had their will in wealth and influence and position; they have had in various ways all that heart could wish; and they have gone through early life, and through middle life, and through the first years of age, and have gone clear down to old age, without God and without hope in the world. They have had all that the world could give them; or, at any rate, all that it will give them; and everything is expended. Their years are all that remain to them; and these are few. They have come to the very end of life. You cannot say that they have ever committed a crime, or that they have ever been guilty of a vice. You can say that they have committed many mistakes and foibles; but externally they have been very good members of society. Yet to that great spiritual brotherhood, to that great realm of life whose morality is higher than the functions of human society, they have not been faithful. And they are, with all the mercies of God which they have had showered upon them, going out of life without God, without gratitude, without love, without hope, almost without character; and there is but a remnant of their years left them.

Shall that remnant be thrown away? Having thrown their first twenty years on the world; having thrown on the world twenty years more, and five or ten years more, they have, perhaps, a year or two left. And shall that perish? Shall that be thrown away? Or, shall they seize this last lingering period, that the remnant of their time may be saved?

My heart is turned toward the remnants to-night. I would that by the spirit of God I might reach to awaken unusual thoughts and unusual purposes in the minds of many who are left over from former efforts; who have resisted all prior appeals; who have stood out against God's great mercy; who have been going wrong, under the dominion of pride, and selfishness, and vanity, and lust, and those appetites and passions which corrode like canker.

I pray God, by his good Spirit, to send, to-night, an arrow home to many of these lingerers. What do ye here now, waiting after all are gone, unclothed and unprepared to meet the wrath of God's laws

which you have broken in their core and nature? Death is near, it may be, with uplifted hand, to smite you; and you are thoughtless and careless!

Oh, remnant of the household! oh, remnant of the congregation! oh, remnant of men! in the last moment, even at the eleventh hour, for the remnant of your wasted life, there is an opportunity for escape. Embrace it. Turn to God and live—here, it may be for a moment, but there forever and forever.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We are gathered, this evening, O Lord our Father, drawn hither by conscious want, and by a great many sweet remembrances. How many years have we come hither bearing trouble, bearing a sense of weakness, and bearing in us the signs of death! How many times have we come dark, to find it light; and weakened, to find that strength was waiting for us! We have seemed shut out of the great realm of prosperous men, and our way has seemed at times forlorn; and yet we have been restored again to sympathy and to joyfulness. How often have we come up here sodden in selfishness, sordid in avarice, and with the world all resting upon us! And here we have beheld in the light of thy countenance better things than the abundance of this world. Hope and faith and joy have shone in our faces; and we have felt ourselves rebuked, and have gone home again determined that while we were diligent in business, we would also be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Thou hast broken our staff; that on which we leaned is gone from us; we have been cast down to the ground, seemingly overthrown; and yet here we have been again restored to strength, and have found that God was more to us than father or mother, than brother or sister, or than companion. And with the mystery of thy secret love, with the strange work which thou dost perform, hidden in the soul, thou hast brought us again to comfort and joy. And if we were to rehearse all the moods of sorrow, and all the experiences of relief, which have clustered about this place, how many burdens have been rolled off! how many hopes have been inspired! how many tears of joy have taken the place of sorrowing tears! how our life has been enlarged, reaching forward into the other! how our expectations have been guided! The night would not suffice us for the rehearsal of all the blessings which thou hast bestowed upon us.

We thank thee, O Lord, that we stand alike in the midst of thy mercies. We are in a wilderness of thy goodness. And yet, there are days in which the earth seems barren and lifeless. Thy paths drop fatness, and that we know right well; and yet some days there are in which it seems to us as though there were nothing left in the world of God.

And now, we beseech of thee, O Lord, that thou wilt yet again hear the voice of supplication; or, better than that, pray for us. Grant that the Spirit may strive in us, and that God may answer the yearning Spirit rather than our petition. For we know not what to pray for as we ought. And the Spirit doth make intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. And wilt thou look within us and see what we need, and deal

with us according to our necessities. Take away what we need to have taken away; multiply what we need to have multiplied; strengthen in us what we need to have strengthened; augment in us what needs to be augmented. Do for us according to thine insight and thine infinite love and mercy, and not according to our foolish and imperfect petitions. How many things we have asked, dear Father, the giving of which would have been our ruin! How many times thy *No* hath been our salvation! How many times we have besought thee to ward off things which must needs come; and in them we have found our life afterward. And even those great troubles that bruised us, yea, cast us down, and left us for dead upon the ground, though for the present they were not joyous, but grievous, afterward wrought out the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

And now we have come to know so little about ourselves, we have come to have such a sense of our own helplessness, that we long for thy wisdom rather than our own. Do thou for us the things that are necessary. Give what thou wilt. Take away what thou wilt. Infinite love cannot err. Thy tenderness surpasses that of any heart but thine. According to thy loving kindness and thy tender mercies dwell with us.

And we pray that every heart in this house may be won to God, and that every sinner may be brought back to the Shepherd and Bishop of his soul, and that every one who knows the light may make it known to those who sit in darkness, and that every soul that is fed may carry food to those that are hungry, and that every one that is healed may succor those that are ready to perish in sickness. And may our hearts be turned one toward another. Grant that there may be the spirit and the presence of God mightily in the midst of this congregation. And may there come life where there is death, and restoration where there is captivity, and liberty where there is bondage. Grant that thy work may prevail against sin and the kingdom of Satan and darkness.

And we pray that thy power may be felt in all this city, and the great city adjoining. Bless those faithful men who labor for the promotion of temperance, and those who labor for the reformation of morals in every form. Be with those that search out the sick, and go among the poor, and visit hospitals and jails; and those that go into waste places and highways and byways. May they themselves be filled with the light and sweetness of the love of Jesus Christ, so that they shall be as men who go forth from the garden, their very garments bearing the perfume of its flowers. And grant, we pray thee, that heaven, though it seem to be so withdrawn from sight, may much of it shine upon man, that he may bring forth fruit. Bless the earth. Hast thou forgotten to be gracious, O God, that the isles wait in darkness so long, and that continents are brooded with night, and that nations are destroying nations, and that wrath and unmercifulness and hatred do can ker the human soul? Oh! when wilt thou bring to pass the promises that have hung on the horizon so long, as the Morning Star that rose not, and that yet, blessed be God! sunk not away? We look to their light. We pray for the coming of the Sun of righteousness. We pray for the final glory of this earth; for the augmentation of man; for the development of society; for the purity, and peace, and prosperity, and gladness that shall come when intelligence shall have driven ignorance away, and true faith shall have purged the earth from superstition, and when love shall drive selfishness and cruelty forth never to come back again. Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praise evermore. *Amen.*

THE NEW BIRTH.

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."—JOHN III., 5–7.

The thing meant in this passage was a great truth—a fact of the utmost importance, transcending any other that was ever made known to the race. It was the annunciation of a point of development which is to the last degree essential. But the form of utterance was figurative. Our Saviour was speaking to one of the rulers of the Jews—one of the members of the Sanhedrim—a man of great moral worth, of great excellence of character, apparently; but he had been brought up, as Paul was, with a conscientious and rigorous adhesion to all the service and ceremony and ritual of the Jewish Church.

Baptism was a part of the Jewish services. Much was made of it. When Nicodemus presented himself to our Saviour, it was all important to him, as Paul declares that it was to him. It was the *what-lack-I-yet* spirit. He came as a man who had made great attainments, but who was willing, if there was anything else, to find it out, and add it to his stock.

He unquestionably thought he was an eminent man in goodness; but if there was in Christ a polish for this eminent goodness, he would like to possess that. And it was this spirit of reliance on external ceremonies that was rebuked by these words, which have been much misinterpreted:

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Men have joined together baptism and the spiritual change wrought by God. It amounted substantially to the authentication of this ordinance of baptism on the part of our Saviour, with no less a helpmeet than the divine influence. There was baptism on the one side, and the Holy Spirit on the other; and these two were brought together.

SUNDAY EVENING, Jan. 29, 1871. LESSON: EPH. III., 13–21. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 813, 784, 854.

At first sight, it looks as though it was so; but it was not. Here was a man who came to the Saviour full of Sabbaths, and holy days, and washings of hands, and baptisms; and when Christ told him he must be born of water, he readily assented to it. That was just what he had himself believed. But when Christ went on to say that the baptism of the Spirit must be added, a new truth was opened to him.

The allusion to baptism was an allusion to the ground on which Nicodemus already stood, and was not an authentication. It was but a historic fact. And to that was added the declaration that, except a man, over and above that, has the Holy Spirit, baptism is useless. To those who are without this regenerating power, baptism is of no comfort, and has no authority.

We are not to take this passage in its narrow and local interpretation. We are to get the full flavor of it by considering it as a part of the whole grand scheme of our Saviour in his earthly ministrations. As a teaching of Christ, it was not so much a thing new, as it was a thing that authenticated and gave authority to many things which existed before. It imparted great clearness to things which were already obscurely seen. It brought together in groups things which had been previously taught in a scattered way. But the substance of the moral truths which were taught by the Lord Jesus Christ had before been taught and used in the Jewish Church. And his ministry, so far as mere truth-telling was concerned, was based on the truths which had already been revealed by the old dispensation. The *originality of Christianity*, as it is called, you may search for in vain. The truths of it were in the things that were taught long before it was known. Experience revealed the notion to man.

But there was something distinctive in it. There was something which made it different from the old dispensation. And what was that? It was the distinct annunciation of Christ, made more and more emphatic toward the close of his life, that he himself stood personally to the race in the place of God. He declared that men must believe in him, in order to be saved. That never was known before. It was the revelation of God—that is, Immanuel. It was the dawn of God manifest in the flesh. He assumed that he was himself that very divine Spirit, which was an original fact, and a characteristic one. But the other fact, and the one which, so far as we are concerned, is the most characteristic in the new dispensation, was that the human race, through him, are to move on the highest spiritual level, where their souls shall be under the direct control of the Divine Spirit. Such I believe to be preëminently the genius of Chris-

tianity. The annunciation was, that while, before, the race of man had been living in the flesh and to the flesh, the time had come when there should be the lifting up of men's spiritual nature, the opening of the whole sphere of moral faculty in man, and the direct contact of it with the Divine Mind, so that God should, as it were, interpenetrate man, and with his thoughts and feelings intersphere man's thoughts and feelings, in the new life to be developed on the old one. That is to say, there was to be a new potency, a greater fruitfulness, a higher education, a more resplendent development, of the higher spiritual nature of man. That whole territory which before had been but occasionally broken into, now and then developing, in some single instances, a prophet here, and a holy man there, was to be enlightened and warmed by the Holy Ghost; so that men in ranks, in masses, in continuously increasing numbers, and by and by in nations, and finally as the whole race, should be brought up into the glorious light and liberty and power of the sons of God.

It was the lifting up of the mind of man from its lower social and animal conditions to its higher spiritual and divinely-communing condition, that characterized the teaching of Christ, who came with authority as God in the flesh, to announce that the spiritual kingdom had come, in which was to dwell righteousness; that the time had come when men were to enter into all the inspiration of the spirit of God; that the time had come when men were to be united as they never were before; that the time had come when men, by the power of the Holy Ghost, should have a power, a faith, a hope, and a love such as they had never before experienced.

These being the teachings of Christ, and the characteristic features of his dispensation, we come to this declaration that he made to Nicodemus, which was not a local and special teaching, but an annunciation of that truth which characterized the whole movement of Christianity as developed by the Lord Jesus Christ:

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh."

Here is reference to the body, and all that part of the mind which was ordained to take care of the body—its appetites, its passions, its pride, its selfishness, its faculties in their perverted forms—all that lower range of mental powers, which work from the flesh, and back to the flesh again, and remain in the lower realm.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

There is to be a resurrection, above these lower appetites and passions. There is to be a higher and nobler condition than that which belongs to the world. And the time for that has come. And Christ declares that unless a man lifts himself up into this higher

realm, he cannot be in the kingdom of God. In order to be qualified to enter that kingdom, a man's heart must be in a superior state of activity, and must be filled with high and divinely-inspired sentiments.

That was the teaching of Christ to Nicodemus. Of course Nicodemus did not understand it. He lost the meaning of it by literalizing it. He marveled and stumbled; and it is not surprising that he did marvel and stumble. Men cease to marvel and stumble at the doctrine of the enfranchisement of the human soul as they are developed into the higher spiritual condition; but men who continue to live under the full influence of their bodily conditions, characteristically do it.

The faculties which serve the body are the most active and the most productive yet, take the world through. Man is mightier as an animal than as a spiritual being. The affections are developed more in their lower range than in their higher sphere. The law of life, to ordinary men, even in Christian communities, is still the law of animal life, or of the very lowest forms of social life. The race is still a race low down. Although I believe there are more persons enfranchised into spiritual life now than at any former period of the world, yet, when you look at the race comprehensively, and form any just estimate of it, it may be said, almost without any exception, that mankind to-day are living in the sphere of the animal, and but a very little way up toward the possible in manhood.

So that if there ever was need of saying that man must be born again into the enlargement and exaltation of a higher sphere; if there ever was a time when men needed to have their eyes opened in respect to the necessity of such a birth, it is just now. With the wars that are still sounding in our ears; with the misrule that still prevails, the world over; and with the tendencies of public sentiment in the best nations of the earth, who shall say that this disclosure is not needed now? Seeing what civilization does, who shall say it is not needed? If such things are done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? If the average conditions of life in the best nations on earth are what they are, what must be the average conditions of life in savagism and the uncivilized portions? The myriads of the race, emerging, have scarcely freed themselves from the earth out of which they came, and are living in the very lowest possible conditions. No man, surely, can say that the race needs no change, no elevation, no divine and spiritual inspiration.

The noblest faculties of the human soul are those which are used the least, and, in wide ranges of being, apparently not at all. They are dormant. I suppose we scarcely ever know what a moral senti-

ment means, except in the most vague and obscure manner. We who have, from childhood, from the very cradle, been taught not to live by the senses, and have been inspired, by precept and example, with the thoughts and feelings which belong to a higher life, can scarcely understand the difference of co-related tribes and nations, where, from year to year, and from generation to generation, there is not, in the best of them, one single throb of lofty sentiment. And yet, this is the actual condition of myriads and myriads of the race to-day. Generosity, magnanimity, purity, absolute truth-loving, the faith and sense of the invisible, benevolence, disinterestedness, trust—all these supreme elements or sentiments are absolutely unknown; and men rise, and grow, and flourish, and fade, and die, and are succeeded by other generations, that go in the same circle; and the curriculum is repeated from age to age.

Thus, generation after generation, the noblest part of human nature has failed. Comparatively, the lower passions and desires, in mankind at large, are stronger than the reason; the reason is stronger than the conscience; and the conscience is stronger than the spiritual instincts. There is in human life very little spiritual inspiration; very little that men can get from each other; very little that they can get from society; very little that they can get from laws and institutions. The prevalent influences and tendencies in the world at large are carnal. They belong to the lower part of human nature. There is, consequently, very little fruit of the Spirit, in the world. If, therefore, there ever was any divine influence to give a new life and an upward tendency to human nature, it is no doubt in existence still.

I have already said that upon this state of facts Christ declared that the new kingdom was to be the development of the higher forces. Now the reason was to have manifestation; now conscience was to predominate; now love was to effulge; now the natural forces in man were to be developed. But there was to be an inspiration by direct contact of the human soul with the divine soul. There had come a period of time when, in the unfolding scheme of God's plans, human life and human nature were to be developed as they had not been before. They were to become higher, and broader, and stronger, and sweeter, and more fruitful.

The era of a more direct and a more universal influence of the higher sphere over the lower had come. The time of the action of the divine mind on the human mind by natural laws would be continued. And, in addition, there would be the giving forth of the Holy Ghost, and the shedding abroad on the human soul of divine love-bearing influences.

When it is declared, that unless a man is born again he shall not

see this new kingdom, it is simply the declaration that a man, in his animal being, or in his lower, passional nature, never will come into the experience which belongs to the purity of these higher feelings; that he never will know what is the joy, the strength, the sympathy, the beauty, or the power of this higher life; that he never will know what is in himself, nor what he can do. God has amplitude in him; but he does not know what that amplitude is until by the Holy Ghost the nobler elements of his being are developed, and brought into supremacy. Until we are born of the Spirit, until that part of us which is in sympathy with God is touched by the divine Heart, and we are brought into communion with God, we shall not see nor know the substance of that kingdom in which God and men dwell together.

This I understand to be the general enunciation of the doctrine of Christ, specially and personally It is true in respect to every one, as it is true in respect to races and generations of men, that he cannot, except by the divine contact, rise into this higher sphere of life. No man can come to himself except the Father draw him. No man can come to God, except God lead him. No man can come to his own highest nature except under the influence of the divine Spirit. We do not even know how to find our way up to our vulgar selves except by the teacher's instruction and example. No man knows how to use his own tongue until the mother has taught him. Every man, in the lower forms of life, has to take things from other sources, in order to develop that which rudimentally is in him. And if this is so of the lower processes of mind, how much more is it so of the higher ones, and of the highest! Where shall we take counsel in respect to the things of God, if not of the divine Spirit? And Christ says that a man shall not enter the kingdom of God without being born of the Spirit. And that is true of every individual one among us.

"But," says one, "I do not believe in this instantaneous change of character. I have no doubt that men can be improved. I believe that men, by attending to themselves, to their thoughts and feelings, and to a proper use of help, may become better; but the doctrine of an instantaneous change of character I never believed before, and I do not believe now." Well, who ever said there was any such doctrine? The Bible never said it, and I do not say it. I do not say that character can change instantaneously except by a miracle. But a man's will can. All that precedes change of will may be gradual, and all that succeeds a change of will may be gradual; but the will itself changes, when it does change, instantaneously, at once. If a man is born again of the Spirit, it does not follow that he is born as quick as a flash of lightning. It does not follow that the whole

divine work is done with instantaneity. That is not the declaration at all.

Whenever a man comes to that point at which he decisively yields himself to the divine authority, and says to God, "Thy will be done," I hold that man to be converted. It is the coming over of his will from self-control to the divine control. Yielding one's allegiance to God is conversion. But the circumstances which led to this result may have worked through long periods of time. Some trouble or some prosperity, some new thought, urged under such and such circumstances; more truth presented; truth presented more clearly—these things may work little by little, and bring a man nearer and nearer to a point where he is willing to submit himself to the sovereign controlling will of God, and to enter the higher spiritual life. And the hour and the moment come in which the soul says, substantially, "Thy will, not mine, be done." And the transition is made.

Now begins another course of gradual influences. When a man has begun to live as a denizen of the new kingdom, a child of light, a son of God, he cannot live perfectly at once. He has entered upon a life in which he is like a little child. And he has everything to learn over again. He is introduced into a new sphere, and is acted upon by new influences. He addresses himself to whatever he does entirely in the light of duty. All his former impulses are changed. All his ideas are exalted. Many things are put down that were predominant before. Many things are lifted up that were low and ignoble before. There is a new realm opened to him, with many new things added, and many old things changed so that they seem new. And now it will require his whole life to rebuild in this new sphere the elements of character. So that the character is changed, not suddenly, but gradually, little by little, by accretion, fulfilling his purpose, at first feebly, but more from day to day, and more from year to year, the work of regeneration going on and on, until he becomes perfect in the higher life.

If, then, you object to a change of heart because it is instantaneous: No, it is not. Nor is it taught that it is. If you object to it because you think character is gradually formed, or undergoes a gradual change: So do I think, and so does the Bible teach; and your objection is no objection. I do not believe that men are ever struck, as with lightning, and instantly changed in character, being debased sinners one minute, and the next minute rapturous saints. I believe that men are subject to very powerful influences which change them very much; but I do not think the change is such as immediately to take away the old disposition and replace it by a

new one, or suddenly to transform the habits. These changes require long-continued exertion and labor. And if your objection to the doctrine of a change of heart lies in its instantaneity, you can withdraw it; for nature and revelation and experience all teach us that the change is a gradual progression from a lower to a higher state; such as that, when it is completed, we shall stand complete in Zion and before God.

"But," says another, "I object to the doctrine of this change by which a man becomes religious, as produced by the Divine Spirit. I see the law of causation as clearly in that which is termed *conversion*, as in any other mental process. It is an effect produced by definite, prescribed and perceived causes."

Who ever denied that? Not I, surely. When the divine mind acts upon my mind, it acts according to the law of my mind, as much as when I act on your minds I act according to the laws of your minds. If you are laboring under a mistake, and I correct the mistake, do I not change your intellectual state? but do I not do it through your intellectual faculties? If your mind is keyed low, and I change the key of your mind, and lift your soul into a higher condition, do I not do it according to the law of your mind? I think that the action of the divine mind is in concurrence with the law of the human mind; and when the Spirit of God enters a man, and enlightens and inspires and strengthens him, it is not done by any other process than that by which the mind is affected. God is infinitely wise; and shall he not know how best to manage the faculties which he has created?

"He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see?"

And he that created the human mind, shall he not understand how to direct it? The engineer of a machine, does he not know how to run it? He that made a watch, does he not know how to set it a-going? And he that made myriads of minds, and has administered over men through ages, does he not know how to touch the springs of thought and moral sentiment, and all the powers of man's nature? Why do we need to fly to the supposition that if it is taught that God changes a man's nature, it is implied that it is done contrary to law, or even against law? Nay, there is no fulfillment of law more signal, more noble, than that by which the Father-heart of God inflames the hearts of men by natural laws divinely inspired, and leads them to a higher state and a nobler condition.

"But," says another, "I do not believe in those scenes where conversion is supposed to take place. I do not believe in revivals. I do not believe in meetings where men are excited, and carried away, and where they shout and pray till they scarcely know what

they are doing, and where some change takes place, they do not know what, and they are said to be converted. I do not believe in what men call *conversion*, when I see how it is performed."

Now, that there are a great many persons who are in such ways as these brought into states of mind that are transitory; that there are many persons who are inspired with impressions respecting themselves which are not valid in fact, no person can deny. It is not my purpose to say that all men are really converted who are called converted. Nobody could suppose this to be the doctrine taught in the Scripture.

But think of the objection that men are religiously influenced and brought into the church in consequence of the effect of meetings. Suppose you should hear a person laughing at schools, and saying, "I do not believe in education. Just see what they do? They take boys and girls, and put them into a house, and shut out all influences that attract their attention, and set them on benches, and give them books, and make them study, and read, and spell, and write, and cipher; and when they have dealt with them in this way for a given time, and filled their heads with this, that and the other thing, they send them home, and think that they are educated. But it is all an illusion, they are not educated." If you mean that they are not perfected in education, that is so; but is it not an honorable thing, and a rational thing, for one to wish to bring up his children with an education, and to lay the foundation of that education in this way?

A person wishes to perfect his manners. He goes to a dancing-school where all boorishness and improprieties are kept out. And he, among others, is put into various postures, and taught to place the right foot forward, and make graceful motions and proper bows and courtesies. And a man says, "Talk about grace! Being shut up in a room, and running about on the floor, and bowing and scraping, and moving backward and forward, and putting the body in a great variety of attitudes—is that what you call grace? I should think there was very little grace about that." But, after all, is not that the way to acquire grace? Is not a school where ease and elegance of motion and carriage are taught a school of grace? And if a person is shut up to the thing which you wish to educate him in, is it not normal and natural? When we organize a school, our object is to instruct those who enter it in those things in which they are deficient. If we want to educate men for their duties as citizens, we have campaign clubs, and meetings, and speaking and writing. If we wish to make a person a musician or an artist, we shut him up to music or art. If we wish to fit persons for social

life, we keep that special purpose in view in their training. And if we wish to inspire men with moral impulses, why not shut them up to moral influences, or put them where moral influences for the time being predominate over all others? If a man lives selfishly, and vainly, and proudly; if he lives carnally, is it not wise to hold up before him the claims of a noble, spiritual life? Is it not wise to expound to him the doctrines of Christ? Is it not wise to bring to bear upon him those influences which belong to the higher range of truth? Is it not in consonance with experience, and analogy, and philosophy, to do by men in religion as we do in music, or art, or any other department of human life?

When, therefore, men find fault with revivals and religious meetings, saying that they are artificial, I reply that every other means of education is artificial, just as much. A revival is nothing but a school for the education of the moral feelings' and is exactly adapted to the necessities of many men.

If you say that many of those who make a profession of religion do not live in accordance with that profession, my reply is that it is with this as with other things. You never saw an apple tree that did not have fifty blossoms where there was one that set and came to fruit. And it may be true that in a community where fifty men are impressed with religion only one will become a ripe Christian, while all the rest will more or less lose their impressions, and relapse into different degrees of inferiority all the way down. The imperfections of the processes of religion are no argument against their reality. They are as real as the processes of education, and business, and the mechanic arts. The same law governs them. And I claim for revivals of religion all that can be claimed for the means which are employed for the development of men in the different realms of secular life. They are normal and philosophical. And if a man says, "I do not believe in the fruits of such meetings; I have no faith in the pretensions of men who claim to be converted there," my reply is, You may not believe in them; but you ought not to disbelieve in them on account of the inconsistencies which accompany them. There are inconsistencies everywhere, and no more in revivals of religion than in many other directions. That there are many lasting fruits from this source, no one who is acquainted with the facts will deny.

Another objection is that men who profess to have been converted are no better than hundreds who make no such profession. Very likely they are not any better. What then? Very likely many men who are gathered into the church at places of conversion are hypocritical; very likely many of them are counterfeits; very likely

many of them are mistaken. But then, was it not better for them to have tried to do something, even if they did make a mistake and fall short, than to have sat still and done nothing? Supposing that there is such a thing as a higher life, is not he nobler who makes a strife for it, even if he cannot fly high enough to reach it, and falls back, than the man that does not strive for it?

Here sit a parcel of doleful critics, that say, "There is no such thing as scaling that wall." One and another make the effort (for they must scale it, or perish); but none of them goes quite high enough, and, exhausted, one after another falls back. And after five or six have failed, these critics say, "I told you so, I told you so." But those brave men who, having failed in their endeavors, fall back, are superior to those vulgar creatures who feel no aspiration, and do not lift a wing.

But you cannot tell whether a man has power or not until you see the inside of him. There are multitudes of men converted whose condition you cannot determine by what you see of them. There is a hidden life in them. The kingdom of God does not come with observation. Many a man has the kingdom of God in him when you do not know it, because you are not omniscient, and are not a discerner of spirits.

But, more than that, you have no right to compare one man with another. There is nothing in this world more false in principle than to measure men in that way, and say that one is not a Christian because he does not live so and so, and that another is a Christian because he does live so and so. It is not right to measure a man who is far down in the scale of endowment and privilege by one who is far up in these regards. Every man must be measured by what he himself is.

In the spring, I take a rose that seems to have lost almost all its vitality, and to be struggling for shoots; and I carry it to Mr. Turner, and say, "Give it a fair chance to grow." And he opens the ground, and gives it a generous quantity of rich earth, and it begins to throw out shoots, and it grows through the summer, and reaches a height of six inches, and by autumn it is really blossoming. But suppose I should look down at this stunted rose, and then up at the large one, and say, "This is no rose at all, compared with that one which has grown nearly six feet, instead of six inches"? You must measure those roses by what they were when they started, and by the chances which they had for growth, and not by what they are now.

And in measuring men, it is not fair to say, "That man is a lovelier specimen than that man." You are not to go into the out-

ward history of one and another, and draw a parallel, and say, "This man was an old curmudgeon; he was insatiate in his desire for wealth; and he had acquired a vast property: but there was a little revolution in his affairs; and he went to a Methodist meeting; and there he became excited, and hallooed and yelled, and afterward came out a Christian! but that man has always been generous, and kind, and upright, in his dealings, and he makes no pretensions to Christianity." There is no justice in such a comparison. It is probable that this man who was hard and grinding and avaricious, but who now calls himself a Christian, has made a greater struggle and a better fight for spiritual life than that other man ever dreamed of. He was low down; but he received a spiritual shock, that set his mind at work. And he undertook to make a better man of himself. And gradually he emerged from his sordid, selfish condition, into a state where he was under the continual inspiration of God's love. And at last he became a man second to no other in the whole region. It took many years to do it, but it was done. And you must measure him by what he was at the beginning. You must take into account that at the outset he was low down in the scale. Ah! he never had a mother that wept and prayed over him as your mother wept and prayed over you, critic! He never had brothers and sisters who were a living interpretation of beneficence, as you had, critic! He never had companions that inspired him with generosity. Everybody plucked at him; and, with eagle's claws, as it were, he plucked at everybody. You, on the other hand, were brought up under the influence of the sweet interchange of kindness. You had advantages for growth and culture such as he knew nothing of. And in your estimate of him these facts must not be overlooked. There is many a man that you despise, and that you say is not a Christian, who, in the day of God's judgment will stand higher than you do, because, having received little, he grew much, while you, having received much, grew little.

But why should a man wish to find fault with such a truth as this of the Spirit's help? Why should a man seek objections against this blessed doctrine, that a wicked man may change his heart? Do you want to believe that a man who has begun must continue to go wrong, and become worse and worse all his life long? Ought not every generous man's heart to be made glad by the faith that though a man's sins be as scarlet they may be washed away, and he become white as snow? Should not the spirit of gratitude be inspired in us by the doctrine of the possibility of a change from a lower course to a higher; by the doctrine that a man may be emancipated from the flesh, and need not live in these animal con-

ditions; by the doctrine that God will meet us more than half way; that he will go as far to find us as to find the flowers? When rightly interpreted, it is the most glorious doctrine that was ever presented to man. It was this doctrine that was revealed by God, and made manifest through his Son in the flesh.

The time has come, then, when men no longer need to live in the flesh. There has come a new development. A divine spirit is given to every man who will accept it. And accepting it, he shall rise into a higher life. He will be born again, and will find himself drawn toward a better and more comforting state.

Is there any man here, to-night, who has been going down, down, down? I do not say to you that unless you are born again you shall not see the kingdom of God. You know that as well as I do. But ah! discouraged man, so often sliding when you thought your foot was safe, so often trying and failing, I come to you and say, *You may be born again.* There is hope for you. It is not necessary that you should go on from bad to worse. There is a power in God by which you may be quickened, emancipated, raised from the dead, born into a new life. There is hope for every man, no matter how bad he is, or how far he has gone in wrong courses. There may not be hope for you in your neighbor; you may turn to him in vain for counsel; so long as you look to men for help you may be shut up in darkness and despair; but there is a God that will succor you. And you do not need to even speak to him. Open your heart, and let it lie open before him, and he will see it, and minister to it. Your mother does not think so tenderly of you as he does. Uncover your soul, and God will shine upon it. There is power in him to do for you that which, by your own unaided will, you cannot do for yourself. He will *work in you to will and to do of his own good pleasure.*

And I say to every man whom God has saved, Do not give up the lost. Do not cast the wanderers out of your watch and care. Hold on to your children, no matter what they have done. Hold on to your friends. Do not cast them off. Hope for men that have gone astray, and strive to rescue them. Work courageously for the release of those who are in the bondage of death. Do not despair of saving the youth.

And to all I say, as long as there is life there is hope. Till the last day, till your sun goes down, in the very last hour, remember that the dear Spirit of God hovers near you, and that by the power of his Spirit you may be enfranchised, and illumined, and made meet to inherit eternal life.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, our Heavenly Father, encouraged by the memory of days gone by. How many times, weary and faint, have we found refreshment in the tabernacles of our God! How many times, despondent and heavy of heart, have we been cheered and lifted up by thy power! How many times have we smitten on our breast, daring not to lift our eyes, and thou hast sent us away testifying of thy mercy and goodness, and of our sins forgiven! How often hast thou made the place of our meeting sweet! Our most sacred religious life thou hast granted to us in communion with thee, and in fellowship one with another!

And now, O Lord our God, we beseech of thee that thou wilt draw us again. Open thy nature to our thought. And if we cannot reach to compass the circuit of thy being, still thou canst grant unto us some knowledge of thyself. Thou canst shine, though we cannot take in all thy beams, nor by searching find thee out unto perfection. Grant unto every one of us so much of the knowledge of God as shall lift his heart above things carnal. Cheer us in the weary way of life. Encourage us to faith and perseverance unto the end. How many there are that fain would fly toward thee, but cannot! Condescend to such. And grant, O Lord, that thy Spirit may inspire in them the petitions which they know not how to utter! How many are there that know their great need, but know not wherein it consists. But thou, O God, canst call us forth. Thou canst lift the heavy weight. Thou canst dispel the gloomy cloud. Thou canst reach in to the hidden springs that give life. Thou canst make life where is death; and light, where is darkness. How many there are that pray for things that are not best! We beseech of thee that thou wilt answer them better than they ask of thee, and do for them, not what they wish, but those things which shall please thee.

We beseech of thee, O God, that thou wilt listen to those whom thou hast taught to pray. Grant unto them things right. And may they have hope, and trust, and royal confidence in God. Oh, may we not distrust thee. Every other one most dear to us may we distrust rather than thee, thou that canst not deceive; thou that wilt never go aside from thy work. May we abide in a steadfast confidence in the faithfulness of our God. Thou art our souls' help. All our help doth spring from thee. Thou wilt succor us, and that to the end.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt inspire us to pray, not alone for ourselves and those immediately under our care, but for others. May our hearts be enlarged. May we look out upon the multitudes that have none to care for them. May we search out those that need special divine grace; and may our prayers flow to thee, and be blessed to their conversion and to their edification in the Christian life. We pray that the spirit of prayer may be diffused among all our families. We pray that this whole Church may be brought up in a praying spirit, and that those especially who are laboring with the poor and ignorant may be moved of God to great power. And may we see the answers of their prayer.

And we pray for this city in which we dwell. Wilt thou cleanse it in every part of it. Bless those that labor for the reformation of morals. Bless those who labor for the establishment of wise laws, and a wise and incorrupt administration of them. Bless those who teach, and those who preach the Gospel. May thy churches be multiplied and strengthened. May their influence be salutary in this great community.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt remember our land, and raise up all those institutions and instruments which are necessary for its evangelization. We thank thee that thou hast given us such a country and released us

from the burdens and cruelties of oppression; and that whilst others are suffering and are trodden down as the dust in the street, we are abiding in plenty and prosperity.

May we not forget those that suffer as once we suffered. We pray for the despoiled, the outcast, the homeless, and helpless. And we pray that others may be speedily raised up on every hand to succor those who are most in need.

And we pray for the time to come when garments rolled in blood shall pass away; when the sword shall be sheathed; when the voice of desolation shall be no more heard in the land. Oh, for the times of education! Oh, for the times of true piety! Oh, for justice and love and fellowship among men! O Lord God, when shall the day come that men shall cease to be beasts and rend each other? When shall come those days of plenty and peace and gladness that are predicted? O Lord, hasten that day in thine own good time. Let the Gospel come forth, and unloose the powers of heaven above. May all the earth follow the voice of thy decrees. May the living power that is in thee be for the restoration of the image of God in man, for the lifting up of the race, and for its enfranchisement and establishment in all righteousness. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit shall be endless praises. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the truth spoken. Grant that it may touch the heart. Grant that it may encourage the desponding, enlighten those that are ignorant, and win those that are reluctant. May there be many that shall attempt this new life, not in their own strength, but leaning upon thine; not in their own wisdom, but inflamed by thine. Oh, that we might learn more and more how poor in fruit of enjoyment is the life of the flesh, and how full of the fruit of righteousness is the life of the spirit! Lift us into that sphere, and give us its deep tranquillity, its communion with God, its hope, its faith, and its victory. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

WORKING OUT OUR OWN SALVATION.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—PHIL. II., 12, 13.

The first question which would naturally suggest itself among men upon this passage, is whether religion is a completed work, imparted by divine power to the human soul, whether it is something finished and made over to men, or whether it is a work which unfolds gradually, an education, differing from others, not so much by its processes and philosophy, as by the higher sphere in which it is taking place.

There have been a great many things taught by stress of controversy in this world, which fell to the ground afterward, by their own weight. There has been a doctrine of *imputed character*, or, as it is more familiarly called, *imputed righteousness*, by a very gross misuse of certain apostolic forms; and men held and taught, in past times (not so much, I think, now), that Christ wrought out a righteousness, and that he conferred it upon those who believed in him; so that it was as something transferred—a substance, a spiritual quality, or a spiritual condition, in its perfection, existing first in him, and then conferred upon others. The illustrative figures frequently employed were those of garments. As our bodies are clothed with dress, so our souls are clothed with the righteousness of Christ.

Such was the figure—for it was but a figure; and on this figure has been founded the substance of a discriminating doctrine dividing between one school of theology and another.

It has been held that some men had sin imputed to them, while other men had moral character imputed to them. By this is meant that one man, being righteous, his righteousness was passed over upon others; and it was said that when they sinned, they were accounted as if they were righteous; that righteousness was imputed

SUNDAY EVENING, Jan. 22, 1871. LESSON: PSA. XXIII. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 847, 865, 1251.

to them, in the sense that, though they were sinful and imperfect, they were accounted as if they were sinless and righteous before God.

The characters of men in this world, have, on that account, been supposed to be things of divine manufacture; and men's notions were so crude that they supposed these qualities were wrought out in the divine mind, and then transfused in their perfect condition, to the human mind.

When the apostle says,

"Work out your own salvation,"

does he countenance such a notion as this? Does he not, on the contrary, refute it, and show that, whatever may be wrought in man by the divine power, it is something that man has an agency in producing; that it is wrought out of a particular state in his own soul; that it is conferred upon him as a responsible agent?

The reasons which formerly made theologians afraid of human interference, in the work of their own salvation, were twofold. In the first place, it was supposed that it would detract from the glory of God to teach that moral results flow from the indirect effect of the divine will, instead of from the direct effect. And yet, all nature had been teaching the world, if they could but have understood it, that this was the method of the divine action, and that God, who certainly should know what his own glory is, and what will glorify him throughout all nature, is setting causes in operation which shall produce the effects that he desires, he ministering to those causes, and they being made to produce results, and the world being made vital, that it may, according to its own law, and in its own place, bring forth its results in all excellence.

So God does work; and doubtless he counts himself to be glorified by the work which he produces.

A better knowledge of that which science in our day is revealing so clearly, would have saved them from supposing that God would be less honored by producing indirect and instrumental results, than by producing direct and personal and voluntary ones.

But there was another reason why men were afraid of human interference in the work of salvation. It was this: that the old Roman church had been teaching the doctrine that men could lay up for themselves, by good deeds, not only righteousness, but a certain superfluous quantity of it, to be drawn from, as money is drawn from a bank, against the time of need.

The reformers undertook to meet this doctrine of good works, as held in the Roman church; and not discriminating nicely enough, they set their faces emphatically against man's works, and taught

(many of them, at any rate) that men could do nothing in the direction of righteousness, or that the things which they did do in that direction were without virtue; that they had no moral quality in them; and that nothing was of any account except that which God himself taught. They were driven by stress of controversy over upon this extreme ground; and they taught that no man could repent of himself. He must wait for the Spirit of God to bring repentance to him. According to their teaching, no man could change his own heart, or disposition, or life. It must be changed in him by the irresistible power of the divine will. In order to set themselves against the Roman corrupt doctrine of good works, they came near cutting up by the roots the motives of personal endeavor, and individual effort.

This gave rise to a style of preaching which shut men off from activity, and almost produced a state of torpidity. I very well remember the time (and it may be that many of the older members of this congregation remember the same time) when preachers, in urging men to a godly life, cautioned them, at every step, that they should not go too fast nor too far, lest they should, as it were, undo the work of the Spirit. In every exhortation, men were bidden to beware, and wait for the divine influence.

So it came to pass that men waited for God—waited as if in order to have the divine nature put into the human soul, there was nothing to be done by man except to receive it. He was the mighty recipient, and God was the Author absolute. And, as the case of a clock may be imagined to stand waiting for the clock-maker to bring the completed machinery and put into it, and wind it up, the case saying, "What am I? I cannot keep time; I cannot make anything in myself that will keep time; and here I stand; and whenever my owner pleases to put a clock in me I will perform; but I must wait till then"; so men stand and say, "If it is God that works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure, what can we do? We want to be pardoned, but we cannot pardon ourselves; and we wait for God to pardon us. We want to be built up in a holy character; but if God himself does this work in us, what can we do but wait?" And so men have from year to year stood indolent, waiting for God.

But experience teaches, what is everywhere implied in Scripture, that religion is not a substance separate from the action of man; that it is only another word for character; and that it is *developed in* men—not *imputed to* them. Influences are brought to bear; but the product of those influences is grown out of man.

Character must be developed from pre-existing materials in the human soul.

It is a false mental philosophy which takes any other view than this. And so far from our being commanded to wait for some new quality, or some new attitude, to be infixed in us, we are commanded to work out our own salvable character—that is, that state, that condition, which makes salvation possible in any man; that righteousness, that love, that faith which makes it possible for the human soul to adhere to God.

"Work out your own salvation."

In other words, the whole moral and religious life is put upon the same platform that all the rest of man's life is put upon. Here are the laws; here are the agencies; here are the instrumentalities; and men acknowledge that they are competent to their use in all other directions but those of morality and spirituality; and the word of God teaches that they are just as competent to their use in moral and spiritual directions.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

There is nothing in man's physical or intellectual organization; there is nothing in his personal endowments of power for achieving material results, to which there is not a corresponding adaptation in man's spiritual faculties. There is that in his spiritual nature which answers in analogy to the other departments of his being. There is no sphere of human existence which man's natural gifts will not qualify him for if he makes a wise use of them. The divine nature takes for granted, implies, or directly teaches, that there is an adaptation, a preparation, a potency, a will power, an executing force, in a man, by which he can become spiritually, as well as mentally and physically, what God designed he should be in his creation. And to teach anything else is untrue in mental philosophy and in experience.

Like any other education, religious education is gradual. It is the result of time; it is the result of thought; it is the result of successive efforts. It is a growth; and to all growths belongs the element of time. No man ever becomes a perfect Christian suddenly.

You must not misunderstand me, as if I would set aside the doctrine of the divine influence. Nor must you suppose that I would teach you that there is no such thing as a great and sudden change in men's dispositions and tendencies. There is. But it is a change which consummates. It is a change which, affecting a man's purposes, affecting a man's determinations or will, leads step by step to those changes which go to make up character; but no man was ever by conversion brought into a perfect Christian state. In the

case of Paul himself, though he was ordained to be a great and mighty instrument in the hand of God, the work by which he was brought into the kingdom was a work which required years and years and years. And the experiences which he has recorded in his eloquent letters, are experiences wrought out just as years are, little by little, and through long periods.

We are encouraged to work out our salvable state, or our religious character, by the declaration that if we work, we shall have divine help.

We may not state affirmatively, that the great elements of Christian life are wrought out in men little by little. They are never suddenly produced. No man ever, in the spring, saw the orchard, within the space of one hour, clothed with leaves and blossoms and fruit. First comes the swelling bud and the immature leaf; then comes the cluster of leaves; then comes the pink prophecy of a flower; then comes the beautiful cluster of flowers; and then, after the air has been perfumed for some days by the flowers, comes the tiny sign of fruit. And this, fed for weeks and months, and nourished through the whole summer, swells itself out, but still is green, and sour, and unfit for us; and it is only when, at last, the autumn comes with its kindly ripening influences, developing the final flavoring qualities, that it is rich fruit agreeable to the taste. At the beginning it was a germ that had in it all that was developed afterward; but it had none of its substance and reality. That had to be unfolded.

Now, in every single special Christian life, we go through the same process or processes of a far away beginning, and of a constant development or unfolding or ripening toward the final form. For instance, one of the earliest traits that belong to the regenerate character, is an aspiration for righteousness, a desire to be better in thought and in feeling. No man has aspiration in its perfect form in the beginning. At first we desire to correct certain faults. It is not the whole character that we conceive of. Aspiration is occasional. In our better moments, we mourn over transgression. We are ashamed of sin. We make good resolutions. We long, with uplifted hands and uplifted hearts for divine help to overcome easily besetting sins.

These periods are at the beginning comparatively feeble, and at long intervals, that touch but single points in the character. But as we grow from year to year, the aspiration begins to be more symmetrical. It goes through the various stages of the affections and the moral sensibilities, and finally arrives at a complete Christian character. Under the influence of aspiration we long for noble

traits, for higher researches in them, for a larger sphere, and for a more perfect conformity to the divine will; but this is the ultimate, not the beginning, form. We begin a Christian life of aspiration at a low point; and the command is, *Work this out.*

So it is with the trait of obedience. When we first attempt to obey the better law, or the law of love as it is in Christ Jesus, not only are we far from potency, but we are far from understanding We know very little of what that law is. We have to go through a varied experience to acquaint ourselves with it. This experience is attended with more or less mistakes and errors. Every man studies his lesson-book of obedience as the child at school studies his lesson-book. There are in the way many sufferings, many tears, many poor lessons, many shortcomings, many besetments; but little by little he grows in knowledge and attainment; and each attainment leads subsequently to a stronger desire to make an earnest forthputting for salvation. And this element of growth, or progression by degrees, is invariable. No man is ever born into Christian character so but that obedience to the law of God is a gradual attainment. It is a thing learned.

Did you ever see a musician that was born with the ability to play the organ or any other instrument? You have seen many persons in whom there was an innate musical faculty; but not one that could do anything in music without education and without training.

And so, although we have our spiritual natures, our innate tendencies to things virtuous and good, they are all obliged to conform to this law of education, training, drill. And God says, *Work out your obedience.* As this is the law of our nature, it is the law of God's grace. And he is patient with us. He is long-suffering. He knows, when he undertakes to save a soul, that that soul will not obey from the beginning. When he receives a soul to save it, he receives it as an imperfect soul. He takes every man that he saves knowing that he is weak, and will do wrong. Every soul that he saves, he saves with all these contingencies.

As it is with aspiration and obedience, so it is with love to God—the best of all developments, and the slowest to mature in the soul. A benevolent disposition, a strong spirit of love, which shall temper, modify, and control our nature, which shall spread itself out as a summer of the soul toward those who are around about us, and which shall lift itself up as a sacred atmosphere toward God—this great attainment is never transferred completed from the soul of God to the soul of man. It is that which we work for, and which, working for it, we miss often and often and often. But little by

little we gain it. Little by little the horizon grows large. Little by little the sun shines brighter to our eye. No man ever yet learned to love God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself, in a day—nay, nor in a life-time; for that is a lesson which is forever being learned, and is never completed on these mortal shores.

So it is with sympathy toward men; so it is with humility; so it is with meekness; so it is with gentleness; so it is with patience; so it is with every single one of those Christian traits which are so frequently registered in the Word of God. No man, because he is just awakened, and converted, and rejoices in God's forgiving love, and is brought into the church, should suppose that he has all these things set in him, and ready for perfect action.

The apostle says that *we are God's husbandry.* Our souls are his farms. And when God begins his work in your soul, and seeks for humility, and meekness, and love, he says to you, "Work out these traits. Plow for them. Sow seed for them. And when they come up, cultivate them. And when they are ripe, garner and harvest them." Every one of these traits is to be made subject matter of careful thought, much prayer, much endeavor, much skillful education. And that is the interpretation, to a large extent, of the divine providences which are coöperating with grace, and are giving men opportunity to develop these traits.

How shall men learn to be patient, if everything is just as they want it? How shall men learn perseverance, if they have everything without endeavor? When men are crossed, when their plans are subverted, when they find the world bearing heavily upon their shoulders, God is saying to them, "Work out patience; work out perseverance; work out courage." When men find that pride dominates in them, and that by pride they are led into trifling, and into fault-finding, and perhaps into interrogating God, saying, "Why am I thus dealt with, O my Father?" God is saying, "Work out humility; work out gentleness." Are circumstances depressed? Is home scowling and cloudy? Is life obstructed? Do you from day to day find yourself kicking against the pricks? The providence of God is saying, "Work out, by these helps, your own salvation." Educate yourself in those moral traits which, if you bear up manfully, and act the part of a Christian, under such circumstances, cannot fail to be developed and established in you.

But we are commanded in working out our own salvation, to develop in ourselves those traits of character which shall make us like Christ, and make it possible for Christ to be companionable with us, and to save us throughout all eternity. We are commanded to do this *with fear and trembling.*

Is it, then, that our God is capricious? Is it that we are like

courtiers in an Eastern despotism, who are liable to be supplanted, and are suspicious of each other all the time? Is our God one that inspires fear? No. What is meant by *fear and trembling* is the antithesis of conceit. It is the antithesis of that contentment which springs from overweening confidence or indifference. If men think they are so nearly good that they do not need to be anxious, the word of the Lord to them is, "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him;" but if a man, on the other hand, has such a sense of his real deficiency, that he feels the need of education in divine things; if he says, "The work is so great that it can only be accomplished by the putting forth of every endeavor, then there will be that *fear and trembling* of which the text speaks—that natural insight, that alertness, that earnest circumspection, which every man has who addresses himself to a thing which is valued, and which stands in distinction from that atonement which a man has who thinks he is well enough off.

At any rate, bring to this work that earnestness which men bring to things which they desire and mean to have in secular life. There is nothing in this world which requires more spirit, more purpose, more watching, than this work. There is no more various culture than that which is derived from seeking those great ends which are set before every one in a Christian life. We cannot afford to be indifferent Christians. We cannot make progress in Christian life, if we live in a state of supine indifference. We are to work out our own salvation as earnest men work, thinking before, thinking after, full of resources, full of desires, as men are when they are searching for things which their whole heart is set upon.

It is not, then, servile fear and trembling, but generous, manly, courageous, wholesome fear and trembling, which come from the best feelings, acting in the best directions, and inspired by the best influences, that we are called upon to be actuated by in working out our salvation. And surely the apostle teaches us that every man needs to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling—that is to say, with unceasing vigilance, with untiring watchfulness. So many are the things which obscure the mind; so many are the things which tone down a man's purpose; so many are the diversions which load the soul with care, and obstruct a man's purpose; so many are the diversions which lead a man from the goal toward which he is aiming, that no man can succeed in maintaining a religious life except at the price of continual thought, and continual faith, and continual determination, and continual dependence upon the grace of God.

This brings us to the last thought; namely, that all our work to secure our own salvation would be most hopeless, if we should work

unaided. There must be this spring, this courage, this perseverance, this motive-power on our part; and yet, these high and noble ambitions will be in vain unless God works with us. For it is God that inspires us to this life. *It is God that works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

It is not to supersede, but to incite and to guide, every human faculty, that the spirit of God is given. It is quite a vain question whether a man might, by himself, by the natural force of his faculties, gain everything that he desires. That which is most to the point is, that there is in the universe a provision by which men are helped. Grace reveals it. But it is not a provision which helps men who do not desire to rise above the ordinary physical conditions of life, above the vulgar conditions of society, above the natural and selfish state in which man finds himself.

Men sometimes think that the way of grace is a hard way, and that the whole economy of this life is in favor of the ungracious and unregenerate state. Men think that the whole retinue of influences in society fight against grace in the soul. And to a certain extent they do. But forever running through nature, through providence, through human life, there is the mind and thought and heart of God brooding upon all human hearts, and working in them "to will and to do of his good pleasure." There is not a soul that does not feel drawn by the divine brooding soul, though it may not know from whence the power comes which draws it. Men have inspirations from God which they cannot account for. Strong influences, drawing even bad men, and leading them to do good things while they are in a state of nature, are from the Spirit of God, that spreads itself abroad through the earth, even as the sun; that strives with those who know, and those who do not know what it is; that strives, I believe, with those who do not know the Gospel; that works with the heathen; that ministers to the Gentiles; that sheds the light of truth upon those who shall never see more than the twilight in this world. This great Father-Spirit, this great loving Spirit, this life-giving Spirit, is universal. The earth, from horizon to horizon, is filled with it. And there is no place where a soul can be that to it is not conjoined the influences of the Divine Spirit. Attempt anything, overcome anything, attain anything, you are not alone. You are not simply left to your endeavors. God works in you. And there is the promise of success.

It has been said, "If it is God that works, how shall it be man also?" Suppose we should have a reasoning organ; and suppose that organ should say to Beethoven, who was sitting down before the keyboards, "Now, either you will play, or I will; but how can you

and I play together?" "How can we do anything else?" Beethoven says. The organ performs according to his touches on the keys; but if there were no organ, his thoughts would lack expression. The thinking mind of the artist expresses itself through the help of the instrument. And so those noble symphonies flow out which entrance the world. The apostle says:

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you."

And philosophy says, "If it is God that works in man, how does man work?" Is there no such thing as coöperation? Is there no such thing as inspiration?

When the child is working, and the mother stands at the door and says, "Bravely done, my child!" is there no new light in the eye? is there no alacrity added to the hand? is there no ambition excited to do yet better? Does not the mother work in the child to will and to do the things which the child cannot do of itself?

In the midst of battle, men who have unflinchingly borne until they are well-nigh cut off, are thinking of retreat; and they hear the voice of their captain crying out to them, and sending a thrill through the air. The result is that they nerve themselves up once more, and victory comes with this last effort. There is success when another mighty soul is working in them, inspiring them to will and to do.

A wandering, weary, spent, hungry traveler sits down, benumbed, to give up in despair. He is met by a hunter. But is his weariness cured? Is the cold dissipated? Is his hunger satisfied? No. But the hunter says to him, "Be a man. Rouse up what is in you. Follow me. And now you shall not wander in a circle, and in vain. I know the way; and if you will make a few more efforts you will be safe." The hunter works in the man to will and to do for his own salvation. He brings him out of danger.

Men are in a thousand ways thrown into circumstances in which another man can develop force in them. And blessed be God, there is a Spirit which works within us, and develops a power in us which teaches us how to accomplish what we will, and guides us by its inspiration to successful results. This is the whole hope of Christian life which is left to us. They who fall back into somnolency and pride and selfishness are without its comfort; but we who wake up to a sense of our privileges, and avail ourselves of this proffered help, are under the administration of a Father who loves us better than we love ourselves, and who is working intelligence and inspiration and purposes in us, and leading us on step by step; and it will by and by complete in us this glorious work of emancipation from sin, this grand establishment of a righteous character, and bring us

into the fullness of his power and love, and into the joy and victory of the upper kingdom.

And now I say, Christian brethren, in the language of the apostle, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure."

God will help you. Try higher flights—God will help you. Try more difficult things—God will help you. Do not be afraid to venture into any path of Christian life. Count yourselves unworthy of nothing. Aim at the best and highest things—it is God that is helping you.

And to those who have stood wistfully looking at the Christian life, wandering hither and thither, not knowing where to go, and fearing to join the people of God lest they should bring reproach upon the church of Christ, I say, Venture, O timid souls! enter upon a Christian life. Commit your souls to God. Cling to Him to whom you are dearer than any babe to its mother. The heart of God knows how to love as the heart of no human being knows how to love. Men are dear to God; and he says to those who come to him, "I will in no wise cast you out, but will give you eternal life.

Venture upon God. Enter upon the Christian life. Enlarge your conceptions, your ambitions, your aspirations. Seek to enter into the kingdom of God. And remember that it is God who leads you to that living Spirit which shall help you in working out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for *it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, this evening, not as to one strange, or reluctant to grant mercy; for thou art more willing to grant good gifts to us, our Father, than we are willing to grant good gifts to our children. Thou art more solicitous to bless us than we are to be blessed of thee; and thy love toward us is greater and wiser and more full of mercy than our own love of ourselves. And we draw near to thee as our Shelter, our Refuge, our Hope, our Life. All that we have is of thee. In thee we live, and move, and have our being. Thou art filling with thy presence all things. Wherever is life, is God. Wherever is law, thy will is known. Wherever things are accomplishing beneficent ends, there is thy wisdom. Thou art felt throughout all thy boundless domain; and things praise thee in heaven and upon the earth. Oh, that our hearts were attuned to this universal rejoicing, and that we might be delivered from sin, and so brought into sympathy with thee, that our hearts should evermore praise thee, and rejoice in thy work!

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant unto us, to-night, such access as children have. May we come here, bringing the confession of our sins. Open our hearts freely before God. Look thou upon us, and see altogether what is in us. Heal that which is sick; forgive that which is amiss; strengthen that which is weak; guide that which is erring; and inspire us, in all parts of our souls, with an earnest desire to live so as to please thee here, and to inherit and enjoy thee hereafter.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant the enlivening influence of thy Spirit upon the word of truth. May it be spoken with sincerity and simplicity; and may it have in it nourishment for those who shall hear.

We pray that thy Churches may abound with thy Spirit. May those who make known the unsearchable riches of Christ to-night be blessed of God. May their words not fall to the ground useless. As seed that falls upon good ground, may they bring forth an hundred fold.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon all the efforts made by thy people everywhere for the reformation of morals, and for the establishment of righteousness.

We pray for the purification of our laws, and our magistracy. We pray for the vindication of justice throughout this great land. Thou hast indeed made this country eminent by thy benefactions. Thou art causing it to grow in strength and in riches. Deliver us from selfishness, and from avarice, and from covetousness, and from infidelity. Deliver us from all cruelty, and all desire to despoil the weak. May we long to have this land consecrated to truth and justice and humanity.

And be thou, O God, with the counselors of the nation. Guide our rulers. Grant that they may be God-following men, and that they may walk in the fulfillment of thy will.

And we pray that thou wilt spread the knowledge of truth over all the sea, and through all the continents. Everywhere may there be a turning unto the Lord. Oh, that the long lingering days of darkness might flee away! Oh, that the bright days of prediction which shall bring peace and songs might come! Oh, for the day when the earth shall not groan and travail in pain! Oh, for the universal diffusion of holiness, when peace and prosperity shall settle down in all our borders, and no man shall have occasion to say to his neighbor, Know ye the Lord? for they shall all know him, from the least unto the greatest! May we in our place, and according to the measure of our strength, labor for this blessed consummation, evermore saying, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And now, Lord, we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant us thy blessing,

not according to our feeble petition, not according to the wisdom with which we make our request, but according to the greatness of thy mercy. In thee we desire evermore to find the measure of benefaction. We desire that thou wilt take counsel with thine own heart. Bless us not as we deserve, but as thine infinite love and kindness prompt thee. Manifest thy tender mercy and long-suffering goodness toward us in days to come, as thou hast in days that are past.

And when, at last, we shall have passed through light, and through darkness, and through trouble and sorrow, and through sin and repentance, and through all the phases of life, bring us, with all thy people, to that rest which remaineth for the people of God. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praise evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, accept our thanks for the cheer and comfort of thy Word. How art thou to us like a Father when we hear that Word! When we listen to the philosophies of men, thou seemest to go away, and art afar off, and art hid behind thy glory. And we call, and no one answers; and we stretch out our hand, and no one takes it. But when we come unto thy word, or hear it spoken, how gentle art thou! how near thou art! how full of sympathy art thou! how art thou unto men as a father is to his children.

We thank thee for all these revelations of our God to us. We rejoice that heaven is full of this sympathizing God. We rejoice that the earth and all the courses of nature are filled full of the might and power of this God of love. Thou that didst suffer that men might not suffer; thou that didst give thy life that life might be brought to all thy creatures; thou that art long-suffering, and art working with nature, with all the forces of heaven and earth for our good, remember evermore the weak and the needy.

Oh, grant that to a conception of thy glory men's eyes may be opened, and men's hearts enlarged, and that men may be led to take hold of thee, and to feel thy power taking hold of them!

And now, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word of truth spoken this night. May it sink down into the heart, and do good, bringing forth an hundred fold. We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

THE PREACHER'S COMMISSION.

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—MATT. XXVIII., 19, 20.

This represents the end of our Lord's ministry upon earth; and it is familiarly called the commission which he gave to his apostles, by which they were thrice enjoined to become preachers of the Gospel. I have no doubt that in the beginning it was addressed to them exclusively, and for the very obvious reason that there was nobody else with him. They were his companions. This was spoken to them at Jerusalem, over beyond the summit of the Mount of Olives, near Bethany. This was his familiar band that surrounded him. And he commanded them—all that were with him—to go forth and become teachers of the new life, according to the doctrine of the new kingdom.

The right to teach, to administer ordinances, to govern churches, has been supposed to be limited to a very few. It has been supposed that it was a right which inhered in, as it were, a spiritual corporation, and that it was transmissible, and that it was transmitted by definitely authorized parties with the divine sanction; and that no man not specially appointed to it had a right to intrude into the office of the sacred ministry. It has been supposed that men must first be *called* to preach; and that secondly they must be authorized by God's church, through its appropriate officers, to take up the vocation of preaching, having been called to it.

I suppose it is best that an order of men should exist, who shall give themselves exclusively to the work of teaching and preaching religious truths. It is best, however, not on any ground of historic authority; not on the ground on which the church has put it; it is best for the same reason that it is best that there should be an order of men who shall attend to the sick; that there shall be an order of men who shall attend to the administration of law. In other words, division of labor has been found to be wise. The adaptation

SUNDAY EVENING, Feb. 12, 1871. LESSON: 2 THESS. II., 16, 17; III., 1-16. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 1008, 981, 1163.

of a man's whole energy to certain special ends makes the accomplishment of those ends more certain, and certain to a better purpose than where they are left to the lower training of all men. Therefore there should be an order of men whose business it is to make known moral religious truth, for that single practical reason—just as schools will be better if there are professional teachers; just as each particular kind of industry will be better if there are men exclusively educated to that kind of industry; just as moral affairs will flourish better if there is an order of men who adapt themselves exclusively to the propagation of moral ideas and moral influences.

There were two reasons why the apostles had this commission given to them. The first I have stated—that they were the only ones who were present. The other reason, which expired with the apostles, and which will never come again, was that they went forth in the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel to be witnesses of the life and deeds of Jesus Christ himself. They were *personal* witnesses. And that which gave them authority, in part, as apostles, was that *they spoke that which they knew, and testified that which they had seen.* And so, when Judas fell out of the band, and they were to select another disciple in his place, they selected from among those that had companied with the Lord from the beginning, that being an indispensable condition. And when Paul was selected, he came in by reason of the revelation which was made to him miraculously. And he declared again and again, that he *also, as one born out of due time, had seen the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Now, with the primitive church this part of the apostolic work ceased. No man can now be a witness of the facts which occurred two thousand years ago. No man can put any emphasis at all on that which was one of the most emphatic points in the beginning of the Christian ministry.

It is held by some, that only those have a right to preach who have received permission from that apostolic body which has perpetuated itself historically by the transmission of virtue from person to person clear down to our time. It is held that there inheres in the church both authority and virtue by which men may be set apart to preach the Gospel; and that they who are thus set apart may minister in sacred affairs.

But we believe the Christian ministry to be as open to all men as any other profession in civil society. And there is no more virtue required of a man who becomes a life-long preacher of the Gospel than of a man who becomes a lawyer, a physician, a teacher, or an engineer. No other conditions should be imposed on one than on the others. That is to say, adaptation to the calling is the only es-

sential thing. No man is called to any profession unless he has a capacity for it; and any man is called to whatever profession he is qualified, by his talent and training, to successfully carry on. This is the general law of liberty in society; and the ministry is not an exception to it. The church is not a close corporation. The claim that it is, is invalid, and ought to be spurned. It belongs to all. And every man has a right to come personally to God, without the help of priest, or any help, if he can. And it is his own inherent right, it is a right which he derives, not through the church, but by the Holy Ghost, to make known any truth which his heart believes, to go forth and preach it, if he pleases, without ordination.

It is precisely in religious matters as it was in civil matters. There was a time when it was supposed that common men had no civil rights. They were all supposed to be stored in the king. And by mutation it came to be supposed that the rights of men were stored in society, and that society conferred them. But we have now come to a better time; and we hold that there is an inherent right in every man, by virtue of his sonship to God, to all the privileges which any other man enjoys. We hold that the individual receives no rights from government, but that government derives its rights from the individual. And as it is with government, so it is with society. And there is to come a democratic view of the Christian ministry by which it shall be understood that it is not a gift conferred by those who are in authority, upon the common people, but that it is a right which inheres in the piety and relationship of every child of God.

Whoever can preach and wants to preach, may preach, all the world to the contrary notwithstanding. The power to do the work, adaptation to it, and the wish to do it, is enough. Let me see a man's work, and I will tell you whether he is called to the ministry or not.

If I go into a man's studio, and find execrable pictures there, I may be polite enough not to say anything; but if I am compelled by the man's arrogance or vanity to speak, I shall say, "My friend, you have mistaken your profession." "Not at all," he may perhaps say; "you are mistaken in your criticism. I have been to school to all the appropriate artistic authorities; I have been in Rome, and painted there; I have painted in Paris and London, and here in New York; I have credentials from men and institutions all the world over; and do not these things make me a painter?" My reply would be, "The power to make good pictures can make you a good painter, and nothing else can." All the parchments in creation cannot make a man a good painter. And, on the other hand, if a man

paints well he does not need parchments. He has his credentials in his training and drill. And there is no difference between the ministry and any other profession in this respect. He who wants to devote himself to the work of the Christian ministry exclusively, does not need to ask permission of any authority except God's good grace. It is a permission which neither the church nor the hierarchy has the power to grant. To his own master a man standeth or falleth, in the pulpit as much as anywhere else.

Whoever, then, is called, may preach. But what is a call? There are many who suppose it to be a strong impression borne in upon a man from without. There are many who suppose that it is some mighty impression which comes to a man, it may be through a dream; or that it is some down-brooding influence which feels at some meeting, or while he is laboring in the field, and which seems to come right from the clouds upon him.

Far be it from me to say that there are no such impressions or influences, and that they are not of divine origin. They may or may not be, according to the facts. But what I should like to emphasize is, that while these may be included in a call to the ministry, they are not descriptive of it. They are not required in a call to the Christian ministry. Such a call is based on the ground of wise judgments, and not on any mysterious or imaginative impression. That may be an auxiliary, but it is not the characteristic thing. A right judgment it is that calls a man to the ministry.

On what ground, then, is this judgment to be formed? Is there anything more mysterious in forming one's judgment in regard to entering upon the Christian ministry than in regard to entering upon any other vocation? Religion has been supposed to be a mystery. It is no more a mystery than anything else. Religion stands in God's original nature of things, and not in the nature of corrupt schools, or schools of perversion. Religion is provided for in the original constitution of the world, as much as any science, or other element of progress. There are some mysteries; but these are in realms beyond where the human mind reaches. They exist outside of the line where man's knowledge ceases. What we mean by *mystery* is *ignorance*. And so there is mystery in religion, just as there is mystery in every other direction. But in forming one's judgment as to whether he shall be a preacher of the Gospel or not, the mind is to proceed by precisely the same steps, and by the use of precisely the same kind of materials as in forming one's judgment on any other subject.

A man asks himself, "Shall I go into the army?" He instantly raises the question of fitness, of taste, of desire. And as he deter-

mines the facts in regard to these elements, he chooses. A man asks himself, "Shall I devote myself to art?" Immediately the question presents itself, "Have you a taste for it? Are you trained toward it? Do you feel that you have mental qualities which adapt you to it? Do you find that you have the suggestive mind and pliant hand which it requires? Have you the interest and zeal in it which will be likely to give you success?" On those facts you pass judgment, and form a decision. A man asks himself, "Shall I become a sea-faring man?" He thinks of all his chances in life, and selects that pursuit, if at all, for good reasons. "Shall I be a civil engineer? What shall I be?" Men look at themselves, at their opportunities, tastes and adaptations, and then come to their judgments.

Precisely the same thing takes place in regard to the preaching of the Gospel. Personal fitness is the great test.

What, then, are the requisites? First, and far above any other, is a nature adapted to generate moral truths; and a nature which, if educated and stimulated, is qualified to produce impressions of morality upon others. Although men may be comparatively barren in this direction, and although, notwithstanding this, they may have a reasonably successful ministry, because they are wise administrators and managers, yet the ministry is a body of men distinctly called of God to promote moral truth. And there is as much genius for moral thought as for artistic thought, or mathematical thought, or engineering thought. Men inherit or receive certain tendencies in their birth. The prophet Jeremiah declared that he *was called to be a prophet from his mother's womb.* That was the way of expressing it in his day. We should say that he had a constitutional tendency to the profession into which he went. There are men who have a constitutional predisposition to, or inspiration for, equity, veneration, spiritual love, things high and beautiful. There are men whose natures tend toward sympathy and affection and beneficence. And they become God's natural interpreters of moral and spiritual ideas. They are men who have power when they come to impress those ideas upon others. I do not say that every man can be a genius in these things. Each one must look into himself and see if he is a lover of moral ideas. If there is a reasonable probability that a man is adapted to the reception of moral feelings, there is an equally reasonable probability that he will be a fountain out of which these feelings will naturally flow.

Another element is that of having the power to communicate. To be a successful preacher, a man having the King's message must be able to make it known. And this is largely a matter of personal

enthusiasm. There is many a man that is adapted to communicate ideas in a professor's chair, who is not adapted to communicate ideas in the pulpit. That is to say, there is many a man who can give out the truth in dry, didactic, systematic forms, by logical processes, who cannot give it out with a fervor which shall make it efficacious.

In order to preach the Gospel to the masses of mankind, that which one needs, is, first, a solid basis of truth; and second, an inflammatory form of truth which takes hold of men through the imagination; through the emotions—not alone through the logical reason, though that is not to be excluded. If he has that beside, so much the better.

So, if a man finds himself endowed with a strong moral nature; if he finds that he has the gifts of sympathetic communication, he has the foundation on which a call, if there is one, may stand.

A great many persons, it seems to me, have made a mistake, if that is a foundation to a call to the ministry. Many men have come into the ministry who have very few moral ideas, or none at all. They are very barren in that direction. Many men go into the ministry who have no gifts of communication. They cannot speak without writing; and they cannot read well what they do write; and they do not think much when they are writing it. They communicate the rounds of doctrine as they find them in the books. They may do some good in that way; they may administer the services of devotion not altogether without profit; but they are manifestly men who do not bring to their function an original adaptation. So we find hundreds and hundreds of men falling out of the ministry every year because they do not succeed—some who have had bishops' hands laid on their heads, and some who have not. The laying on of hands makes no difference. A good minister is good, if he never had a bishop's hand on his head; and a poor minister is poor, if he has had twenty bishops' hands on his head. If a man has got it in him, he can get it out, and he does not need to ask for favors; but if a man has not got it in him, no favors can be given to him which will enable him to get it out. It is all in a nutshell.

Many men have felt very strongly inclined to go into the ministry,—it seemed to them such a beautiful business! It was such a pleasant life! Ah! we are men of like passions with you. Ministers are proud like other folks. They have temptations in their sphere of life, as well as the business man has in his. And if a minister, lifted above men, did not experience their weaknesses, and have a common sympathy with them, he would not be half a minister. It is because he is bone of your bone, and flesh of your flesh, and pas-

sion of your passion. among other things, that he is fitted to be a good preacher of salvation to perishing souls. But multitudes of men think the ministry is such a delightful thing! They think it is so splendid to be set apart from the hurly-burly of life, and to stand before an elect congregation, and to minister the cleanest ideas in the cleanest form, without the wranglings and debates of outward life. And then, it is so respectable! And then, a man who is settled in a good parish is so released from thoughts which harass men in other spheres! And while the living of many men is not certain, he gets his salary regularly. It is a good thing. It is every way respectable and genteel. And a minister is at once admitted into the best society. And so a great many people think they are called to the ministry.

Therefore it is that we find so many men who are without work; so many who are without any call to preach, although they thought they had a call to the ministry. Nobody is called to preach unless somebody is called to hear him. And if, when a man has tried his gifts patiently and faithfully, giving himself time to develop them and make himself fully known, he cannot reach the minds of men, it does not follow that he is not a good man, and good for many things, but it does follow that he is not good for a minister.

I once saw a German professor sitting by the roadside near Cincinnati, breaking stones. He was the son of the Minister of Public Instruction in the kingdom to which he belonged. Being expelled from his own country, he came to this land. He was an honest man, and would rather earn his bread than beg it. He could not find work fitted to his station; so he tried to find work in the department next below his station. He could not find it there; and so he, like a sensible man, took what he could get. And there he sat breaking stones. I noticed that there was a burly Irishman not far from him, who was worth twice as much as he—who could break stones easier, and work longer and better than he. If I had said anything to that professor, I should have said, "You are not fitted for this business"; but it would not have followed that he was not fitted for a higher business. If he had been put in a professor's chair in some academy or college or university, he would have done a great deal better, and might have done well.

So I think it is no discredit to a man to say plainly to him, "You are not fit for the pulpit. You have misjudged in the use to which you are putting your talents. You may make a good editor, but not a good preacher. You may make a good professor in a college, or a good physician, or a good merchant, but not a good preacher. You have tried and failed: that is the best evidence of it." It is because men misapprehend the nature of the calling; or it is because

in forming their judgment in regard to their adaptation to the work of the ministry they make a mistake, that there are so many who meet with little or no success in that avocation.

A call to the ministry, then, consists in a personal fitness for the ministry in moral, intellectual, and sympathetic endowment. And whoever is called with these elements, let him go into the ministry. If he prefers to go into a highly-organized, well-regulated church, let him go into what is called *the* church. I mean the Episcopal Church. There are two or three churches—the Roman Church, the Greek Church, and the Episcopal Church; and this last, with its decorous, beautiful services, is admirable; and every man ought to be grateful for it. And let him who is called to the ministry go there if he prefers that form of service. But do not let him deceive himself, and suppose that it was this, that, or the other external thing which put him into the ministry. It was the grace of God, added to what his father and mother gave him in his natural endowments, that put him there. These other things are mere surplusage. Such matters of order and arrangement are good enough in their way, but they are incidental things. The thing itself is, that he was fitted for his work. That is the main point. And if you prefer to go into the ministry without those other incidental things, go without them. They are optional.

Councils are called to ordain and license men to preach. And if a man chooses to be examined by the ministers of his neighborhood, and to be guided by their judgment as to his general adaptation to the work of the ministry, well and good; but have a council of ministers a right to say to a man, "You shall not preach"? No, not in our country. Have they a right to say to a man, "You shall preach," or "You may preach"? No. When they examine a man, and find that his qualifications in regard to character, personal piety, and natural endowment, are such as to fit him for the work, and they say, "We authorize you to preach the Gospel," do they give him a larger liberty than he had before? No. He had as much right to preach before as afterward.

Well, is there no use in a council? Yes. What is it? That is just the question. According to our Congregational view, it is within the province of a council, after having examined a man, to say, "We have looked into the matter of this man's fitness to preach, and we are prepared to recognize him as a minister among us." Otherwise the man would have to go through a probation and give people a chance to find him out by his actual work. Licensing is merely a process by which a man gets letters of introduction into the church. Beyond that it is nothing at all. The right to preach God gave him. No body of men can bestow it upon him. Neither

can any body of men take it away from him. They can say to the churches, "We do not believe in him any longer," but they cannot say to him, "Shut up!"

It does not follow because men have certain gifts which fit them for the sacred calling of the ministry, that they should enter upon that calling. It is not a matter of course that all men who are eminent in their moral tendencies should be pressed into the service as preachers. There is sometimes almost a compulsory influence brought to bear upon men. The mother prays long and earnestly that she may see her son in the pulpit where she desires, above all other places, to see him. But her son is born an artist child. And all the way up, there is the clear shining of the primitive imagination, of the artist nature, in the child. And it is called an *eccentricity*, an *irregularity*. The father fights it; and the mother fights it. It is like fighting light, which comes in at the window, and dances on the carpet. You cannot sweep it up, nor get rid of it. There is nothing to do but to let it shine, as it will shine. The mother and the father have consecrated the child to the ministry, and the child means to become a minister, because his parents wish him to. And so he goes to school, meaning, as he says, to study for the ministry; but he thinks of pictures. He means to preach; but he thinks of pictures. The artistic talent is working in him all the time. He goes through college, saying that he means to be a preacher; and yet he is a natural artist, and wants to make pictures.

Now, it is wrong to put such a man into the ministry. God calls him to something else, and keeps telling him of it; but men say to him, "Be a preacher of the Gospel." My advice to him would be, that he should follow the strong indications in his nature. If a man is drawn toward a profession, let him be a professional man. If he wants exceedingly to be a mechanic, though he be a rich man's son, let him be a mechanic. If God calls you to the shop, you will be a thousand times happier than if you ignore the strongest tendency of your being, and go into something for which you have no adaptations. Thousands of men have chosen professions which are not fitted to them, and have neglected tendencies which, if they had been encouraged, would have made them happy all their days. It is of the utmost importance, in a moral point of view, that a man should work in the line of his strongest noble faculties; that he should not disregard, in his profession, that which God hinted to him in giving him the charter of his being. If a man finds himself far better adapted to mathematical pursuits than to preaching, let him choose them. If there is any vocation of a secular nature toward which a man feels specially drawn, let his profession or career

be in that direction. But if a man has no special predilection, and he has those endowments which fit him for the ministry, there are a hundred reasons why he should choose that.

In determining whether a man shall preach, after the matter of personal fitness is settled, the question to be considered is, What is the relative want in the different departments of society? Where is there the most need of men? And if you look over society to-day, where is there the most need of men? I think there is nowhere in society any great necessity which stands in such crying need of able, strong men, as the pulpit. The law is absolutely overrun, pressed down, shaken together, running over—so much so, that hundreds say that the profession is spoiled. They say that a man cannot get a living legitimately in the law, and must go into some other business, must form outside connections, in order to thrive. Only here and there one succeeds in the law. But the profession is so immensely filled with temptations; the remunerations are sometimes so great; the prospects which it holds out are frequently so promising, that it draws multitudes to it.

It is much the same with the medical profession. There are almost as many doctors as there are patients. The city is full of them. They starve on every corner, all through the land. There are more than can find foot-room. Where can you find a region in all our territory from which the cry comes up, "Send us over physicians: we lack them"? Nowhere. They might say, without irreverence, "Where two or three are gathered together, there are we in the midst of them," all over the land.

Look at the industrial pursuits. How thronged is society with the intensest rivalry in business! We do not need more factories. The pursuits of industry are well served. There is no need of officers of the army. There is no need of farmers. There is no need of mechanics. There is no need of physicians or lawyers. There is a surplus in all these departments.

How is it with the ministry? Hundreds and hundreds of churches are empty. There are hundreds of fields where churches ought to be established. There are large populations to whom the Gospel is not carried. Looking over the community at large, we see that there is a famine in the church, and a pressure everywhere else. Nowhere else is there so great a need of able, devoted, fearless men who are willing to give their lives to the work of usefulness; nowhere else is there such a marked, growing and crying need, as there is in the sacred ministry. And this ought to be a subject of serious consideration with young men who are determining what shall be their life-work. One should not go into the min-

istry merely because there is an opening there, without regard to his fitness for preaching, but if he is fitted for it, and he is situated so that he may go in one direction or another, and he has a moral impulse, and he feels that he will have a reasonable chance of success in the ministry, or through it, it seems to me that he should go in that direction. And it seems to me that there are many young men in this city that are achieving success in worldly callings who ought to withdraw themselves from those callings, and devote their energies to the work of the ministry. And whatever pleasure there may be in worldly pursuits, there is no pleasure in it to be compared with that which is derived from preaching the Gospel to men, simply and fearlessly, for the love of it.

Men seem to think that there are many cares and responsibilities in the Christian ministry. It has many cares and responsibilities; but I do not think it has so many as the other average professions. It uses mainly the noblest faculties of the soul. It deals chiefly with the clearest truths. And although it may not be so fruitful in money as many other callings, there is no calling whose remunerations are greater. The best men that I have known were not poor ministers, but ministers that were poor. But there is such a thing as Christ's disciples—as he said they who followed him should—inheriting houses, lands, all manner of possessions, the whole world. They who give their very soul-life for the salvation of their fellowmen, are caught up into the sympathy of men. They are, as it were, adopted.

"I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

Though the average salaries of the ministers of the United States are not over four hundred dollars, taking the country through, I point to the profession of the ministry as a profession that bring up their families, on the whole, with more culture than any other. I point to the profession of the ministry, and say that they contribute more able men to the learned professions than any other profession, and that, on the whole, they have a better thrift They live as well, they are as prosperous, and I think more so, than any other profession. I believe it is partly the fulfillment of the promise,

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things [what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink, and wherewithal ye shall be clothed] shall be added unto you."

They trust that promise, and they realize it.

Let no man, then, be deterred from preaching the Gospel because the ministry is an impoverished profession; for though it cannot give you great wealth, you may hope to get from it that which great wealth cannot give—*happiness*.

But, while I advocate strenuously the entrance into the Christian ministry of educated men who intend to make that the business of their life, I think that they should not constitute the whole of the ministerial profession. On the other hand, it seems to me that there are multitudes of men in every community, who are called, not waiting for an education, to be preachers of the Gospel. Not only should there be men who are taken into the ministry by an abbreviated course, as the Methodist church very wisely takes men into the ministry, but there ought to be more lay preaching. Men ought to preach the Gospel who do not make preaching their professions. The judge, the lawyer, the artist, the school-teacher, the physician, the mechanic, the engineer, the day-laborer, whoever has been called to seek his livelihood, and to develop his talents in some secular channel, has a sphere for teaching and for preaching which he ought not to ignore nor to neglect.

In the first place, it is utterly impossible for the population of these whole United States to be supplied with regulation churches and regulation ministers. We shall have immense destitutions, and I know not for how long a time. It is preposterous to think of waiting until we have what is called a thorough educated ministry. It therefore becomes necessary for men to engage, in the intervals of their regular occupations, in the work of preaching the Gospel, who are not highly educated nor ordained. Every man in any business who loves God and men, and has opportunities and gifts, should preach—and not occasionally, either, but often. There is no reason why men should not feel it to be a part of the duty of every week to make known somewhere the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. If you have the power to do it, who has exonerated you from the obligation of doing it? Are we not to speak of that love which has made life radiant to us? Are we to hold commerce with hope immortal, and keep that hope a secret from others? Are we to be inspired from day to day by the mightiest truths of creation, and shall there be no echo of them sounded out to others? It is your business, being a Christian, to *let your light so shine that men, seeing your good works, shall glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

There are spheres which no minister can reach. What can I do, going into Wall Street, and into the banks, and brokers' offices, to preach the Gospel—that is, to make application of it to the special trials and temptations of men there? They have their peculiar weaknesses and dangers, and if I go preach to them the theology and ethics of the pulpit, there is in my preaching a want of adaptation to their case. I lack a knowledge of their circumstances, and therefore cannot sympathize with them in those circumstances. And

they say to me, "We respect your desire and effort to do us good, Mr. Beecher, but you never stood where we do, and therefore you cannot know what we have to contend with."

When a man like Daniel Drew goes into a broker's shop, and preaches, he can do what I could not do. Here I can do what he could not; but among his own kind, among sinners with whom he is in sympathy, he has a message that I could not carry. And so in every profession or business there are men who have, or ought to have, a message for those in that profession or business, which it would be out of my power to deliver. Every person who has a saving hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who is a child of light and love, has a message and nourishment for those around about him, and can do for them what I cannot. As the father and the mother in the family can do for the children what no other person can, so in every profession and in every business there are men who can do for their fellows what can be done by nobody else, and can save some who otherwise must be undone. Nobody else can preach such things as he can. His sphere may be limited, and the occasions may only come at intervals; nevertheless, there is a call of God to him to preach.

The lawyer, among squabbling contestants, has a sphere in which he may bring home lessons of peace and love which no other man has. The doctor, in the sick room, taking the hands of emasculated young men who are destroying their life by vice—what counsel, what warning, what saving truth, might he not pour into their needy ears! Here is society opening opportunities for relieving different and constantly recurring wants; and one man can supply one element of the Gospel here, another man can supply another element there, and every man has some level where he can work as no one else can. And do you who have faith in Christ, and make a profession of religion, bear a hope of salvation for yourselves, and never speak of it to men who are dying around you for the lack of it?

I think there is nothing more striking than the unused strength, the latent and undeveloped power, in the church to-day. There are many churches whose strength does not lie in the pulpit. There are many churches where the pews surpass, in moral power and efficiency, the pulpit. There are many members of some churches who are more competent to instruct the minister than the minister is to instruct them. And it seems to me that the church has a right to edify itself by the gifts of all its members.

In meetings, those accustomed to speak, emotive and imaginative persons, persons that are excitable, do the talking; whereas, the man of thought, the man of patient investigation, the man who has

reaped the field of life, and is full of valuable experience, sits silent, a year, five years, ten years. He never opens his mouth. He is a granary full of corn, not a single kernel of which is dropped into the ground. It comes in silent, it stays silent, and goes out silent, and does not propagate itself. And there is many a man of ample resources who keeps those resources to himself. Is that right?

Do you say, "I have no call"? Why have you not a call? You are like one who puts his fingers in his ears, and then says, "I do not hear anything. Is it not a call that you have the power to speak? Is it not a call that there is the need of speaking? Is it not a call that you are in the church to be edified by all its members, and that the church has a right to your sympathy and power?

It does not follow that you are to attempt to make long speeches; but in some way there is to be testimony from you in the church. The lay members are not faithful to their duty in this respect. They do not preach, in the church, out of the church, in Bible-class and Sunday-schools, in jails and hospitals, in the car, in the field, where there is no social adaptation, and where is no Sabbath bell, or preacher, as they ought to do. They are competent to stand up and utter the right word in the right place; and yet they say nothing. How many men there are who are well-informed, influential, powerful, and yet do nothing, because they are not regulation ministers!

The call to preach lies in the ability, and in the heart that sympathizes with God and man; and we shall never have full-power preaching so long as we depend upon professional ministers. For they bear the same relation to the whole church that the superior officers in the army do to the whole army. And as the rank and file must fight, so the great body of the church must witness and testify. And when there is a living power in the whole church, we shall find, not only that the Gospel will have free course to run and be glorified, but there will be such an education in it that those who preach will become better and better Christians, and nobler and nobler testimonials of the very doctrines which they preach.

It only remains that I should say a word to parents, and those who are rearing the young. It is high time that we should go back again to the example of the mother of Samuel, that our children may be brought up from the cradle with a higher ideal of moral life.

If you ask me how I came to be a preacher, I reply, that I never knew anything else. I found it all cut out for me when I grew up. The mother who bore me expected that I would be a preacher. I learned, with inexpressible emotion, late in life, that she had ordained me, with much prayer and many tears, to be a foreign missionary. That part of her desire never was fulfilled; but

that I was to be a minister, that all her children were to be ministers—of that she had no more doubt than she had of her own faith in Christ. I found, too, that my father was expecting it; and I had no more doubt of it than he had—after my boyhood was passed, I mean. I went through all the dreams of boys who intend, first or last, to be stage-drivers, and midshipmen, and captains and generals, and what not; but as soon as I began to touch real manhood, the very atmosphere was such that I felt called to preach. There were seven of my father's sons in all, and every one of them preached. One or two of them tried to escape, but they gave up the trial after a little while. My youngest brother chose the sea after going through college; but he relinquished it, and went to preaching. He went on ship-board and made himself ready to take command; but father's prayers were too much for him and pulled him to the shore. And he is preaching now. And that influence which prevailed in my father's family, was a legitimate household influence.

Take not the poorest and weakest ones of your flock, and say, "Being good for nothing else, we will make ministers of these." Take those of your children who are strong and deep—the strong-built and the deep-built; take those who are able to carry their keels through deep waters, and make ministers of them. The church needs them. The times need them. Begin with them at the morning of their life: not to weary them; not to disgust them with importunity, but to teach them to take sight of all questions of life along the line of moral truth, which is the highest wisdom. Bring up your children to preach, that they may raise aloft the banner of Christ and carry it, as his faithful champions, through life. May God raise up some from out of this congregation, who shall be earnest and efficient preachers of the Gospel.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We thank thee, our Father, that we are permitted to draw near to thee. Though thou art invisible, yet we feel thy presence. Our hearts respond when thou, by thy Spirit, dost move upon us. Though the eye cannot discern thee, though we hear no voice, though we reach forth the hand in the darkness, and there is none that we can find, yet we know that thou art present. There is the witness of thy Spirit with ours. There is that in us which rises up unbidden of ourselves. There is communion by which we enter into the secrets of the life to come, and are refreshed more than by our own will, or by our own thought, or by anything that is in us. We rejoice to believe that thou art communicable; that thou dost with infinite condescension bow down thyself to our wont; that thou dost follow us with thy nature and surround us with thy presence; that we are buoyed up, and borne upon thy being as ships are carried upon the great deep.

So, in thy mightiness, in the grandeur of thy being, in thine infinite sufficiency, we find our weakness and our ignobleness remedied, and all our wants supplied. And we rejoice that thou art our Father We do not humble ourselves when we are humble before thee. We bow down before thee without disgrace. We confess our sins to thee. We soar yet, notwithstanding the poignant shame which we should have in the face of men. Better and purer thou art than all others. Nowhere except in thy presence is there such hatefulness of sin. Nowhere else is there such discord of wrong things as in thine ear. And yet, nowhere else is there such lenience, such forbearance, such consideration, such delicacy. Nowhere else is there such all-suffering love.

How wonderful is that forgiveness which thou dost mete out, thou that forgettest nothing; thou that dwellest forever in the presence of all knowledge! And yet thou dost forget our iniquities, so that they are sunk as the stones in the sea; so that they are hidden from memory. They are as if they never were, to thee. How wonderful is thy mercy! How great is thy magnanimity! How far beyond our reach or meditation is that grandeur of thy nature by which thou art out of thine excellence planting in us excellences that we need! And yet, why dost thou wait so patiently? Only because thou art God. How art thou the Guide of our life! Thou dost direct our conduct. Thou art greater than we in the direction of goodness. Thou art more tender than the tenderest. Thou art more gentle than the gentlest. Wonderful as is thy power, vast as is the sweep of thy being and the realm in which thou art moving, nowhere among men is there so much of graciousness and long-suffering and patience as with thee. We, because we are common sinners, we because we are ourselves weak, are in sympathy with the weak; but why dost thou, who art lifted up in the grandeur of thine own estate, have compassion upon the poor and the needy? This it is to have divine nature.

And now we pray that we may more and more think of thee as divine in goodness and mercy and graciousness. We thank thee that these have not been expended upon us vainly, but that goodness and mercy and graciousness are always at work, and have built us up into righteousness. Thou art not content that we shall stand still and then be shined upon with happiness; thou art ministering to us, by thy love and by thy benevolence, many chastisements. Pains run to and fro and every whither, throughout thy domain. But mercy is the attribute of God. And everywhere thou art administering throughout the heaven and throughout the earth, for the upbuilding, for the edifying, for the perfection, of those who are thine.

We are glad that so many have reached the estate of the blessed. We

are glad that of those who have gone home from among us there are so many who have sat in these seats with us; so many who have sung together these hymns; so many who have prayed and rejoiced together here; so many who have triumphed over death, and are at rest with the people of God in heaven. And we thank thee that there are so many more whose faces already shine with the coming light, and that so many of us are drawing near to the line and bound of departure, and looking over, yea, and inhaling the very atmosphere of the other side by foretaste.

And we pray that we may be prepared to live, and be prepared to die. Grant that there may be nothing in this life which shall be so sweet to us that we shall not rather be with Christ, which is better than life. And may we not be so weary of life here that we shall desire to depart. May we await thy righteous will.

And now, grant thy blessing to rest severally upon all that are gathered together in thy presence to-night. Even with the richest blessings of the Son of God, endow them. The indwelling of thy Spirit grant unto them. The fruition of thy people may they have in their heart.

We pray that thy word may be expounded for the edification of those who listen. May we rejoice together in sacred hymns. May we rejoice in common communion with thee in hope and faith and expectation.

And grant, we pray thee, that thy kingdom may come, and thy will be done in all our land. May churches be built in waste places. May there be men who shall spend their lives in making known the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. We pray that thy work may be carried forward in the islands of the sea, and in the dark places of the earth; and that there may be those everywhere, throughout the bounds of the earth, who shall make known the cause of Christ. And may they be strengthened. May they see that their labor is not in vain.

Advance thy banner. Come, thou that bearest victory, and consummate thy work, and let the whole earth see thy salvation. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the word of exhortation. Grant, we pray thee, that it may inspire thoughtfulness. May there be many who shall inquire whether they have done their whole duty to their God and their fellowmen. May none wrap their talents in a napkin. May all consider what use they shall put their powers to. We pray that thou wilt inspire men with wholesome thought and a new spirit. May every family be a church; and may every parent be a priest; and in love may households be brought up; and may many come forth who shall carry Christian effort and example into all professions and pursuits of life; and may there be many who shall go forth as ministers of the word, and who shall be valiant in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We pray that thou wilt revive thy churches everywhere. And in this church, especially; in the heart of its pastor and in the hearts of its members; in all our schools and colleges; and among the poor and necessitous as well as among the prosperous, grant that cleansing, inspiring Spirit by which we shall live a life unto God. Hear us in these petitions, and answer us, through Christ the Beloved. *Amen.*

THE PRIVILEGE OF WORKING.

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." EPH. III. 8.

The union of pride and humility was never so remarkable as in the case of Paul. The most profound self-abasement, and the most intense self-confidence, were united in him. In one point of view he declares that he was second to none of the apostles in labors. He declares that he abounded in labors more than all of them—as he did. And yet, in other points of view he speaks of himself as less than the least of them, as in the text:

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints [not merely less than his fellows, the apostles, but less than the saints], is this grace [this glorious permission] given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

You will find the same declaration contained in the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians:

"Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God."

There is humility for you. But listen again:

"By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain."

He did not think it necessary to make believe in order to be humble. He knew that fact was fact.

"I labored more abundantly than they all."

But the moment he took another view of it, he added,

'Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

The predominent feeling of Paul in respect to his ministry was, that permission to labor for God and man was an unspeakable privilege. He accepted his toil, his suffering, the obloquy which was brought upon him, his exile, his weariness, his sickness, and all the other concomitants of his extraordinary career; and then, in view of them all, he declared that to preach the Gospel to men who did not know the truth, was an unspeakable privilege. He re-

SUNDAY MORNING, Oct. 30, 1870. LESSON: 1 PET. I. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 43, 424, 666.

joiced as if it were a favor, and a remarkable favor, that God had conferred upon him.

Through many years he was the most prodigious of workers. It may be said that Christianity has delivered itself to us on account of Paul. It was his conception of Christianity, it was his application of it to the various phases of life, that determined the shape which Christianity has assumed in the world. Yet, through all he preserved the feeling that he was one who was favored, in that he was permitted to work for Christ. He had the feeling, not that he had attained a great thing, but that a great thing had been done to him. He had a profound sense of his obligation for the redemption of his soul by Jesus—such a sense as made him feel that he never could repay the debt, and that all his time, and his every thought, and every power, and every effort, would only be a minimum contribution, a mere fractional payment, of his indebtedness to Christ. No one (not even Dante) ever had such a vivid sense of what it is to be without God in the world, and to be a child of wrath and darkness, as the apostle Paul had. If you go through his writings, and collect his intimations and affirmations on the subject, you will be struck with the magnitude and dreadfulness of his conception of the state of being lost. He had, all through his life, the feeling that he had been as one suspended over a mighty abyss, and that in an unexpected hour he had been grasped and brought back to safety again. And he never forgot the shock. He never got rid of the impression which was produced upon his mind. No one ever had a more intimate and personal feeling, either, of the meaning of this rescue by the Lord Jesus Christ of which he was the subject. With all that he was in the fullness of his power, with all his intuitions, with the success which attended him everywhere, with that self-consciousness which rather magnified than minified his real gifts, the apostle always felt that he owed everything he was to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have in my mind a man of a great nature, with great faults and great excellences, to whom God has given a companion of rare excellence; and I have heard him say, many times, with tears rolling down his cheeks, "If I have been saved from wickedness, and I have turned out anything good, I owe it to that woman." I have heard this testimony borne, not once nor twice, but many times. It is one of the most affecting testimonies that one can have, that the influence of another person has been such as to save him from the evil that is in him, and in the world, and lift him up on a higher plane, and give him an exalted sphere and life, and that he owes a debt of gratitude to that other for that influence.

Now, Paul, feeling so in regard to the Lord Jesus Christ, says, "By the grace of God I am what I am." "Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them.

The figures which he employs show this. He speaks of himself as of one that was lost, and recovered again; as of a person lost in a great wilderness, and sought out, and found, and brought back, and saved from starvation, or from other destruction. He speaks continually of darkness as having been his former state, and of himself as having been restored to light by the power of Christ. All his foregoing life was as the life of a man in a dungeon, except that he did not know it; and all his after conscious life was as the life of a man who was living and walking under the blessed sun. And all that he owed to Christ—to the influence which Christ had exerted upon him. At other times he speaks of himself as of one who had been taken captive by cruel enemies, but had been rescued. As a person is rescued by being bought out of slavery, so he sometimes represents himself as having been bought by the precious blood of Christ. At other times he represents himself as a warrior triumphing over his enemies. As one sets free those who are endungeoned, by breaking down the door, and opening the recesses of cruelty, and bringing out the victims, so Paul speaks of himself as having been found and rescued by the military power, as it were, of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus different figures are employed by Paul interchangeably, to set forth the truth that he had been horribly ensnared and horribly bruised in his bitter captivity of sin, and that he had been rescued by the Lord Jesus Christ, and brought out into life and liberty and gladness, into an ampler manhood, and into a hope far transcending the present, and that he owed it to Christ. It was not the drift of his faculties, nor the drift of the institutions under which he lived. It was not the work of his organization nor of his will. It was the continuous divine influence. He was conscious that it wrought this work in his soul; and he never forgot it. It never wore out with him.

His life therefore seemed to him a gift. All that he had, and all that he was, and all that he could think, and all that he could do, and whatever enthusiasm he had, and whatever power he had of inspiring other people with enthusiasm—these were, all of them, in his language, *bought with a price*—even the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, wherever Paul labored, and however much he labored, he never seemed to himself overworked. Never had he exerted

himself beyond what he thought he ought to. Never did he feel that he had performed an overplus of work. There is a generosity and humility in love which can work from a profound sense of generosity. There is a love that scorns measuring. And the apostle never felt, "I have worked fully up to my share of that which is to be done on earth." He felt, rather, "As long as I have a sentient emotion, as long as I have a pulse-beat, all that there is of me is not enough to pay the debt that I owe to him that loved me, and gave himself for me." He felt that he could never pay that debt. There are some debts, you know, that cannot be paid. Heart-debts you cannot pay.

Oh, how beautiful a thing is such sensitive and honorable gratitude! There are men who cannot hear the name of Arnold of Rugby spoken without tears, to this day, though he has been dead for a score of years. Thomas Hughes, who has just gone home, is one of them. I do not believe he could speak of him five minutes without tears, and without saying, "From the foundation to the roof-tree, everything that I am, I owe to that man."

There are persons who know that if they had not been taken by Jesus at just such a time, into friendliness and love, and been snared in the golden-meshed web of divine sympathy, and been rescued, they would have been utterly destroyed. And in regard to everything that comes to be bright and beautiful in their experience, to the end of their life, they will never cease to feel, "I owe it all to him."

There are children who cannot hear their mother's name mentioned without having a tide, a gulf-stream, as it were, setting out of their heart. For they know that the life which they are living here, and which they hope to live hereafter, was so intimately connected with her influence and fidelity and love, that if it had not been for her faithfulness, their souls would not have lived.

These are very blessed testimonies; they are comely, seemly, beautiful, rational, admirable; but above them all stands One who is more to us than father or mother, or brother or sister, or husband or wife, or dearest and most self-sacrificing friend—Jesus Christ, who sacrificed his life for us, and now lives his heavenly life for us from day to day, and from hour to hour. And Paul felt, as we ought to feel more than we do,

"The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

He really felt so; and he never could do enough for Christ. You never can do enough for one whom you thoroughly love. What mother could ever do enough for her child when her heart was

bound up in it? In the hour of love, who ever could say all that he wanted to say, or express all that he felt, or do all that he desired to do? How poor, to love, is the best offering of love!

No one ever had a more vivid sense of the grandeur of the work which God was carrying on in the earth than the apostle Paul. Of the redemption of men from the bondage of the flesh to the liberty of the Spirit; of the joyfulness, the beauty, the creative admirableness of that work which was going on—he had a very clear and abiding conception. Men generally think of the world, and of God's work in history, from their exterior. We trace the development of commerce, the development of art, and of the mechanic arts, the upbuilding and wasting of kingdoms, bringing in more or less of the moral element; but to the apostle Paul the whole history of this world lay in its interior. Although the wisdom and love of your neighbor are represented to you by the emblem of the body, yet, after all, the real man that you think of is the interior and invisible man. And God's work, to the apostle Paul, was that spiritualizing, Christianizing work which was going on.

The kingdom of God came not with observation. That kingdom was described as leaven hid in three measures of meal. And the leaven was not less there, and was not less powerful in its working, because it was invisible. The apostle saw all things in this light of the interior meaning. Everything in this world to him was to be estimated by its relation to man's spiritual development and growth. What the ground was worth, what the spider was worth, what the throne was worth, what the merchant and his merchandise were worth, was to be determined by their effect upon man's spiritual nature. The apostle saw within. He was a seer in that regard.

The wonder of the future was added to this. There is to be a history yet in this world, compared with which all past history is as nothing. I believe that we are just about in the month of March in the world's great year. We have got through the winter, and are in the blustering days when nature does not know whether she means to be hot or cold; and the world is full of wars and commotions and storms. And yet, many beautiful things are developed. There is a great deal that is sweet and delightful; but it is March weather, with here a bright day, and there a dark and stormy day.

Is this a modern idea? To a great extent it is. It is largely the outgrowth of modern habits of thought. Did the apostle believe there was to be a future of Christ's work on this earth? We should expect that as a Jew he would have believed it; for the Jews believed that the whole world was to be given to the Messiah; and when Christ came, if he would have put himself at the head of a

Jewish phalanx, and accepted their prejudices and hatreds and notions, every Pharisee, every Scribe and every scoundrel, would have bowed before him and taken him to be their king. It was because he would not do this that he was rejected. The Jews, with the exception of a few, did not believe in a near and important consummation. They believed that the earth was to be redeemed; only Jerusalem was to be first redeemed, and the Jews, the aristocrats of the globe, were to be the instruments by which Christ would redeem the world. They believed that there was to be a great future on the earth; but it looks as though the apostle Paul did not believe in it. For instance, if you turn to such language as you will find in the 1st of Thessalonians, it seems impossible to suppose that Paul did not expect that Christ would come in his day:

"This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [go before, anticipate] them which are asleep [or dead]. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

There is no getting away from that. If it means anything, it means that the writer thought that before he died he should stand with his companions and see the consummation of all things.

Nor can you read the following passage in the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians, without coming to the same conclusion, in regard to Paul's impression on this subject:

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."

In this chapter Paul goes through that same thought precisely. Therefore it has been said that he believed there was to be no great future of Christianity in this world; that there was to be a cataclysm; and that in his own day it was to be consummated. And, indeed, it looks very much so.

But, on the other hand, look at such a passage as this, in the 1st chapter of Philippians, and the 20th verse:

"According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."

Here you perceive that the apostle Paul expects to live, and die, just like anybody else, and go to Christ on the other side, leaving the work behind. He says the work leads me to want to live, but I shall leave it behind." That does not sound as though he expected

that Christ would come, and that the work would be wound up. "I desire to live for the sake of the work," he said; "although when I think of Christ I desire to depart."

You will find this same thing in the 2nd Epistle to Timothy:

"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Here is no idea of a precipitate consummation. Here is the regular modern thought—namely, that there is to be an indefinite continuance of the work of God. "I shall die, and go and inherit my crown; and in long succession others will go up after me"—that is the purport of the apostle's declaration.

How are we to reconcile these things? I have no doubt that in certain ecstatic visions, the apostle saw the consummation so near, that it seemed to him as though there was not a handsbreadth between the end and himself; and he spoke accordingly. Doubtless at other times he had the view that the kingdom of Christ was to have a future in this world—periods of evolution and extension. How long he did not know. And so he fluctuated between these two ideas. That he felt that he was going to die and go up to heaven, and that the church would continue on earth, and go forward for ages, we do not doubt; and that he had a clear and correct conception of the coming glory of Christ's kingdom on earth, and that it was to be a kingdom built without hands, a mighty spiritual kingdom, and that compared to that which was to come all the glory of the past of the race was but as a taper compared with the sunlight, we do not doubt.

Now, he looked upon the new heaven and the new earth that were to come, and he saw how glorious men were to be. He saw, doubtless, in prophetic vision, at times, what nations were yet to become. Without doubt, much that he saw was obscure; much of it was enveloped in a golden haze; but there was much that was clear to his mind. And when he thought that he was to build that great kingdom, that his hands were now helping to lay the foundation stones, the magnitude and the grandeur of the work overwhelmed him, and he felt that it was a privilege to be permitted to labor in such a great development. And looking at it more in detail, I do not know how any one can help feeling so. Consider the salvation of a single soul; the rescuing of a man from his animal life; the bringing him under that divine influence by which he is transformed into a truly spiritual being, the beauty of heaven beginning to grow upon him; the blessedness and the glory of God beginning to

rest upon his head. To be permitted to lead one single soul to Christ, if one only stood at the right point of view, would seem to him more than a crown, and more than a coronet given by a king's hand.

When Raphael was executing the various frescoes which he was commissioned to paint by the Roman Papal government, he drew the figures, determining the subjects, and grouping the different elements. He worked the designs out with his pencil. Then he put them into his scholars' hands, and they went on and filled them out. And after they had done the best they could, when their part of the work was completed, Raphael was accustomed to take his pencil and give the pictures a last finish. And so he was *the author and the finisher* of the pictures worked upon by these his apostles.

To be permitted to be with Raphael, and belong to his school, and paint upon the wall a picture that came from his brain, and was to bear his name, was thought to be one of the greatest of privileges, and was enough to make an artist's reputation.

We are of Christ's school. He lays out the work. We execute some of its intermediate stages, while his grace perfects what we do. And if we were in a condition of true spiritual-mindedness, we should feel that it was an unspeakable favor that we were permitted to work out these blessed figures, these glorious natures, these living pictures, which are to shine forever and forever in the heavenly land.

No man ever had more of what I may call spiritual *esprit de corps* than the apostle. No man ever carried about with him such a sense of who was working with him. No man ever so well understood the grandeur of the campaign on which he had entered, or was so conscious of the presence of the soldiers that were alongside of him. I do not mean that he referred to the holy men who were living on the earth, though he reverenced and honored them. But he felt, "I am a laborer together with God." He felt that he was surrounded by hosts, clouds, of witnesses.

Our heavens have a drought in them, I think. In our dusty modern times, in our hard materialism, we have swept out of our sky pretty much everything that we cannot see. We believe in telescopes, and in everything that the telescope believes in, but in nothing else.

The Apostle Paul had a wonderfully populous heaven above his head. All the hosts of God, to his thinking, were at work. He believed that the ransomed did not go into everlasting indolence and call it rest. He believed that the heaven was thronged with spirit-workers, and that they had sympathy with the work; that they liked it not only, but were commissioned to help perform it; and

that time, and all the cope, were filled full of God, and God's workers. And he felt that he was ever working in the midst of this great and royal company, never unattended, never alone. And when he was upon the sea, or in the wilderness, or in the persecuting city, more were they that were for him than they that were against him. All the way through he worked with a magnificent sense of companionship. And it was this which made him feel that he was highly privileged. To be admitted into such a working company was a great thing.

You think you do not believe in that. Yes you do. Every one of you, if you were to go to Europe, would wish that you had an introduction into the Court of Queen Victoria. And if it so happened that you were invited to a royal reception, you would write home about it, and all your friends would know it, and you would not forget it to the day of your death. If a woman, of flesh and blood like yourselves, only in royal conditions, takes notice of you, and invites you to go where you can just see her, look at her, your pride and vanity are gratified; for the spirit of self-seeking, and the appetites and lusts are about the same the world over, through all time, and in all governments. Men feel that when they are invited to see such a man as Humboldt, they are honored. They feel that when they are invited to the country seats of nobles, they are honored. They admit it to themselves, whether they admit it to their fellows or not. There is a universal feeling of this sort. And Paul had it. But I do not think he felt that Agrippa had anything to give him. I do not think that if it had been any monarch, even Cæsar, Paul would have felt particularly abashed in the royal presence; but to him it was God, it was Jesus Christ, who was leading forth the spiritual forces of the universe, and was King; and the heavenly host were the aristocrats and nobles. And he felt that he was called into their company. And to be called into such company touched the feeling of humanity in him, as well as that of rejoicing pride; and he felt it to be an unspeakable privilege to be allowed to work with such workmen.

No one ever seems to have had so grand and magnificent a sense of the final outcome of God's moral government over this world as the Apostle Paul. There is a great deal more meaning in many of the passages of the Bible than we can give to them. The fact is that many of the texts of Scripture kill sermons dead. A wise preacher skips the best texts. He cannot work them up.

When mahogany was first introduced into Europe, there was not a carpenter shop in any kingdom that had tools highly tempered enough to work it. It broke every tool that there was, and

new tools had to be made, of better steel, and steel of a higher temper. And our tools with which we handle texts, are not of good enough material. We must have new ones with better material, and material more highly tempered. Here is this passage:

"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end."

How far away that magnificent end is we do not know. But in the contemplation of it our imagination lifts itself, and spreads its wings, as the eagle spreads his.

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

Who can give an interpretation of that? He that dare, let him do it; but not I. I should as soon think of setting a mouse at surveying the chain of the Andes, and making a typographical report, as to take this magnificent vision of the consummation of God's mediatorial government in the universe, including this world, and what others we know not, and undertake, without experience, and without anything else but the blazonry of these grand figures, to give any precise idea of what it was—only this: that after a campaign, magnificently planned and nobly conducted, the General comes back to his King, and having defeated everything in the field, and having subdued all the provinces, and holding in his hands the keys of cities, lays them at his King's feet, and then takes his place near by his seat. That is the figure.

So when the vast work of God on earth and in heaven shall have been done, in the far and grand future, Christ shall come back, and shall lay before God the tokens of universal victory, and God shall be all and in all. Whether it shall be by the resumption of the Son, or whether by some co-equality, or some other steps, no man knows, and no man need try to know. Sufficient it is that it shall be a scene of unequaled grandeur and glory.

Paul worked with that in his mind. He had a horizon that swept as far as thought. And he could not be lifted up into petty pride and vanity by the consciousness of what he was doing, of who his companions were, of what the field was on which he labored, of who it was that led him, and of what was the consummation of this great scheme in which he was but a factor and single unit.

We may, I think, take from this example of Paul even more les-

sons than we have attempted to draw as we have gone on. His sense of the privilege, the great favor, of being allowed to work in the kingdom of God, ought to give us some new ideas, and some new issues to old ideas.

First, we are living in an age which is apt to glorify the individual. *The sovereignty of man* is one of the cant phrases of the day. There is a great deal in philosophy, as well as a great deal in the best part of human nature, which is leading men to feel that they are immensely important. Man is important in God: out of God he is worthless. But philosophy makes man feel that, in and of himself, without any regard to his origin, without regard to the branch on which he is growing, he is individually something great. This feeling is fostered by the institutions under which he lives. Our institutions tend to make everybody independent. We are talking about the rights of the individual. We are seeking to secure them. We are stimulating the individual, and we are endeavoring to stimulate the great mass of men, so that every individual belonging to the republic shall be a factor of power. That is all right. But the overaction of this tendency is in the direction of pride and vanity—democratic pride; philosophic pride; pride of individuality; the consciousness of our own strength, which often ripens into arrogance. And this destroys that fine sense of spiritual dependence which belongs to the noblest natures. It takes us largely out of the feeling and spirit of Gospel life. It takes us out of household life. It takes us out of that life in which we are woven into the divine nature, and makes us idols.

Now, we want a sense of personal unworthiness. We are not in danger, in this nation, of being crushed in our pride too much. In some nations there is danger, where the king crushes one half, and the priest crushes the other half, of being unmanly, and ground down into a sordid submission; but that is not a temptation of our nation, either in their native or imported dispositions. In this country we are in no danger of being too humble. On the other hand, we need, more than almost anything else, influences that shall rationally, intelligently, promote some sense of our relative weakness in the great scheme of God in this world. We need something which shall make us feel that nature did not give us everything: that redemption came by Jesus Christ. We need something that shall teach us that there is not alone a Son, but a Sun of righteousness; that there is not alone a providence, but a grace of God. We need something that shall keep alive in our minds a sense of the grandeur of that work which is going on, and the glory of the future of that work, and its outcome in this world, so that we shall

not seem to ourselves to be conferring favors, but rather receiving favors, when we are permitted to join our force with God and our fellow men, and work for the world and for eternity.

This subject may comfort those who are weary of work; or rather, it may rebuke them, and so convert them. There be many who say, "Have I not fulfilled my duty?" "As long ago as I can remember," says one, "I have been working in the Sunday-school, and in the industrial school; but now I am married, and duties at home engage me, and I feel as though I had done my share." What is your *share?* Do you suppose work is a contribution-box, and that God is a beggar, and that he is passing it down to you, and that you are to throw in your *share?* The box comes round, and it must be filled up. And what do you owe? Do you not owe life in its totality? That which you give to the household is a part of what you are giving to the world. And if you have time and power to do more, it is not a benefaction. You are not benefactors conferring benefits on the community. It is a privilege that you are permitted to rear in the household, children for God and glory.

Ah! you do not know what you are doing. You carry your little babe. Each one's child, you know, is a paragon! And you dress it, and love it, and bear it about in your arms, and friends admire it, and how proud you are! There is something amiable and lovable and beautiful in this; but it is only an emblem—for that babe you carry for friends to admire before there is anything admirable about it, so far as outward appearances are concerned. But when you have trained it, and shaped it, and its character has been made illustrious, and you have brought it before God, before Christ, and into the presence of the whole household of faith, to be loved and admired, then, O mother, you will feel, in the presence of God and the holy angels, that you have had an unspeakable privilege. No person will ever bring a child in his arms to Jesus and not feel that he has been himself crowned in having permission thus to bring a human being home to glory.

If God gives you work in the household, and that absorbs your talents, well and good; but if you have more talent and power than is demanded in the household; if by a wise economy you are qualified to do something outside of the household as well as within it, do not fail to see your privilege. Oftentimes it is the case that a person can do work as a candle does, which gives light to all that are in the room, but, not stopping there, throws light through the window and along the road as well. What mothers and fathers do in their homes may be reflected far beyond the human sphere to which they are confined, and bless many others besides their own

families. And if you are working in the household, do not demean yourself or dishonor yourself by saying, "I have done about my part; I have worked long enough." Never! *never!* Not until the last heart-beat, not until the last expiring throb of power, will you have done enough for Him who gave all for you, and who gives all for you.

You belong to a different family from that of the vulgar and selfish. You belong to the generous, to the noble, to the true, to the Christlike, to the heavenly. Do not, therefore, measure and partition off your bounds. Work as long as there is work and you have strength to do it; and count it a blessing, every day, that God gives you something to do.

So, whenever you have a chance to put in a blow, put in a blow with heartiness, and be glad of it. Be willing, generous, brave soldiers. When, in time of danger, the general of an army calls for a forlorn hope to carry an important position, see how some noble natures, who have as much to live for as you or anybody else, quarrel for permission to do that work. And see how they take their lives in their hands, and plunge into the cloud of death, almost not caring what befalls them. And when Christ's battle opens, and he calls for volunteers, and it is for us to labor, and suffer, and give up all that we have and all that we are to have, let us not shrink from the undertaking. Do not weary in well-doing. You have gone a great many times, and a great way off, and your feet grow tired; but do not give up. Are you pondering whether you shall leave that class? Are you questioning whether it is your duty to continue to work in that neighborhood? Are you beginning to say, "Somebody else must take this work, for I have done my share"? Oh, rebuke the ignominy of such a thought as that. Work on, my brother; work on my sister; God needs you, and man needs you. Until tears are wiped away, and hearts cease to ache, and sin no longer desolates, you have a mission in this world, and you must not give up your work. Remember that you are not working because you are conferring a favor, but because it is your privilege to work.

There are many who are almost out of patience because they are so continually approached with solicitations to do something. There are so many colleges to build, so many schools to found, so many home missionaries to support, so many foreign missionaries to send away, so many churches to be maintained, so many societies to be kept up, so many poor people to be taken care of, so many calls for charity, that men get out of patience. I suppose I am no worse than you are in this respect, and sometimes I feel as though I could not bear solicitation. Do you ever lose your patience? Then you know

how to pity me. Do you ever get tired, and want to shut the door in the face of Providence, and say, "You have come often enough"? Then you know just how guilty I am. Do you ever feel, "I wish I were dead"? Then you know how I feel. And do you, when you come to you better self, feel very much ashamed of it? Then you know how I feel when I come to my better self. In those golden moments, when I think of what Christ has done for me, when he is more than father or mother to me, when I have some sense of the arms of God in infinite love around about me, when I look up into the face of the forgiving and unwearied Saviour—the faithful One—and think that I was ever tired of his work, I am ashamed. A child is sometimes fretful, when it is sick, even to the mother, and pushes her away with its hand; and with tears, when it gets well, asks her forgiveness. Even though it was sickness that did it, it can scarcely forgive itself. And so a soul feels that is impatient with God. Christ redeemed you by his precious blood; and if you have been endowed with strength to amass property, and he wants your treasure, and he appeals to your conscience and reason, and says, "You are my steward, and I gave you life and health that you might work for me and your fellow men," do not withhold it from him. Is there anything which you possess that is too good for Christ—talent, money, labor, or suffering? "To you it is given to suffer with Christ," says the apostle, "as though you were distributing precious gifts." My dear brethren, be not weary in well-doing.

Well, how long shall you work, then? As long as you live. How long? Till there is no more war nor thunder nor wretchedness on the earth; till there is no more slavery to mar and disfigure the image of God in man; till there is no more superstition to blindfold men, and plunge them into destruction; till there is no more ignorance to mislead men, and cheat them of their birthright; till there is no more pride, or selfishness, or avarice, or power of the air, to lord it over the spirits of God's people. You are to work till all things end. You are enlisted for the war. If you enlisted under Christ's banner, you enlisted to remain as long as your life shall last. You are not a three-months' or a six-months' man. And you have reason to sing for gladness that you are permitted to go into Christ's army and work until the conflict is ended.

The things which we do here perish in the doing, almost. When we write our names in time, it is as when men write their name upon the sand. The ocean is at it almost before they leave it. The waves roll over it and soon obliterate it. Such is fame in this world. The world is too full to remember everybody. Almost everybody must be forgotten. Only here and there are the names of men per-

petuated, and generally they are men who do not expect it. The work which will be remembered is that which is registered above. You must strike clear through beyond the physical, you must work where the angels shall require you to work, you must make an impression on the living hearts, the palpitating souls, of men. And to do this, devote your whole self—your body, your talent, your property. Put everything God has given you into this great spiritualizing work. And rejoice that God has permitted you to work. Die with your harness on. When the Master comes, let him find you working. And go up from the sweat and the toil, from the infirmity, if need be, and the decrepitude, of earthly fidelity, into the blessedness of eternal youth. And one moment's look of the Eye of Love will be more to you than all the glories of the round globe. And when the Ineffable shall say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord," all the symphonies that ever sighed music, and all the sweet sounds of whispered love, and all that the ear has drank in upon earth, will not equal the ecstasy which will come to your heart in that one single word.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our heavenly Father, thou hast taught us not to have fear, except the fear of love. Thou hast unveiled thyself; and with a voice that nations could not speak, through holy men of old thou hast made known to us what thou art, and what are thy dispositions, and what is thy will, and wherein our duty lies. And we rejoice that in that disclosure, while there is something for fear, there is more for hope, and that every special act of obedience brings peace and gladness in widening circles forevermore. Blessed are they to whom thou hast revealed this, not by the outward letter, but by the emotion of the heart, and by the unuttered communication of the Spirit. How blessed are they who have been taught that they are the children of God, and have in themselves the witness and the joy! How blessed are they who are armed against everything that can assault their peace, and who know that if God is for them, none can be against them to harm them!

Blessed are they whose world is not that which the eye can measure and the hand handle, but who are influenced by the eternal world, and who, being sons of God, know that they are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus.

Grant, we beseech of thee, unto all of us who have named thy name, more insight of thy grace; more personal experience of thy presence and of thy love; more contrition for our own sinfulness; more gratitude for thy faithfulness; more love for the glory of thy nature; more sympathy for that great work of salvation which thou art carrying forward in time and upon the earth.

Grant, we beseech of thee, that we may live more and more toward thee; toward things spiritual; toward the ineffable; toward treasure that cannot

be exchanged, nor bought, nor sold, nor lost, but which once won, is won forever. Oh, grant that our lives may be evermore as the flowers, looking to the Sun, and grow bright in the light thereof. May our souls become rich toward God. And though we may be increased in outward strength and outward goods, may we cleave to our confidence in thee. May we be grateful for all the mercies of thy providence to us—for life; for health; for household mercies; for the great comfort of our children; for all the goodness which thou dost strew with such bounteous hands in the meagerest path, and which overflows in many places. Grant that we may not be unmindful of these minor blessings. But may we discern that they are only the first-fruits, the earnests of thy goodness to us. May we discern that for the soul is reserved coronation; that thy providence deals bountifully here with our bodies, but that thy grace waits to crown us hereafter. And may we all know that we are the sons of God, and feel royalty beating in our souls, and long amidst duty and care and labor, in those moments when the soul looks away, to appear in Zion and before God; there to know as we are known; there to hush every sorrow; there to see death itself overthrown and slain; there to rest from temptation, and from sin, and to be as the saints and the angels of God.

How can we thank thee for such hope? How can we enough bless thee for the consolation which hath already been ministered to us? In the greatness of the Way in which we have walked, how many times should we have failed, but for our hope in God! How many afflictions have broken upon us that would utterly have overthrown us, but that thou didst hold us! Yes, Lord, thou hast been a pavilion, and we have run into thee, and have hid, until the storm was overpast. We have wondered in the day of trouble that we seemed to ourselves not to be ourselves, but to be kept in a great peace, while our troubles were as the outward storm that beat upon the house, and we heard the peltings of it, and felt that we were secure, and were happy. So canst thou temper affliction. So canst thou by affliction release us from our passion and pride and worldliness. So in the midst of affliction canst thou kindle in us the strange lights of coming glory, and fill us with hope and joy in the Holy Ghost.

We rejoice in this mystery of experience—in this incommunicable life which thou hast granted unto many of us. How many are there that were very weak, but that have grown strong by bearing burdens! How many are there to whom the outstretched arms of Christ have been as the wings of a mighty bird! And bearing, they have been borne upward, and carried above all trouble and all sorrow. How hast thou made the very word more fruitful of thy promises than seeds are that come forth a hundred fold! For thou art He that dost abundantly more than we ask or think. And this is the measure of thy grace—not of our desert, nor even of our containing power. It is the measure of the horizons and bounds of thine own heart-generosity to us. And so we are always more, if we but knew our joys, our riches, and the love and the promises that wait upon us, than conquerors, through Him that loved us.

And now, Lord, we mourn over our unworthiness. We mourn that when thou lookest upon us there is no such sight as when thou lookest upon thyself. For all thy goodness, how much selfishness we give back! For all the influences that swarm the heavenly gate, how sordid are we! How full are we of earthiness! How much from day to day do we seek the bread that perisheth, and the things which come from men! How are we effeminate, shrinking from suffering for Christ's sake, and seeking the smoothest paths, and asking that ours may be the pleasantest place in experience! How little is there in us of that endurance which thy servants of old had!

We beseech of thee, O Lord, that thou wilt forgive our sinfulness; our want of sensibility toward thee; our want of love toward those that thou dost love. We beseech of thee that our hearts may be enlarged, and that we may endeavor, though it be only feebly, with our sympathy to follow thine affection, and to love our brethren—not those that are comely, not those that already bring forth the blossoms and the fruit. As thou hast had to love us in our sins, and in our deformities, and in our sores, and in our sicknesses, and hast ministered to us; so may we learn to take up those around about us who are deformed, and are filled with things deceitful, and are not comely to the Lord, nor to our feeble moral sense. May we learn to have patience with them, and compassion upon them, and to long for their deliverance, and to pray for them, and, if need be, to labor for them. And may we not call this a sacrifice, but the best using of ourselves. May we live to do good, even as thou didst come doing good in thy mortal life, our Exemplar and our Head.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt forgive all the pride that we have had, and all the vanity that we have had. If any of us think we have done much for the Lord, and praised our own wisdom, and looked with censoriousness upon those who have labored less, as if they were our inferiors, or looked upon them with pity and contempt, forgive us that we have arrogated superiority to ourselves; that we have sought to make ourselves seem fruitful, when we were all unprofitable servants. If thou wert to reveal the truth as it is to the heavenly Eye, we should seem indolent and self-seeking; our motives would seem poor and mixed; and at best we should seem sinful, and only sinful. And yet, thou art sparing and encouraging us. If we were perfect thou couldst not be more tender in thy heart than thou art in all the ruggedness of our sins. Though we are outcasts, we are as if we were royal; and though we do not understand, and do not reciprocate, and do not know how even to accept the mercies of God aright, they come as the dews come by night. They come as the light comes through all the summer day. And this is the royalty of thy nature. This it is to be God: to be full of graciousness, and of compassion, pursuing purity and truth and justice in all thy way, but pursuing them by the road of love. And so we beseech of thee that we may not count the long-suffering of God as another argument for our own sinfulness.

Call back those who have wandered. Call back those who, knowing better, have transgressed their own deliberate knowledge, and sinned against the light that shines upon their paths. Call back those who have backslidden from their faith in Christ. Call back those that once were very near, but that now are afar off. Remember the forgetting; remember the prayerless; remember those whose consciences testify against them from day to day, and testify in vain. And we beseech of thee, O Lord our God, that thou wilt grant that there may be many that are in darkness, and are arrayed against thee and thine, who shall be subdued by the power of thy Spirit, and by the word of truth, and by the mighty grace of God. And may there be many souls born again in our midst. May there be many that shall become witnesses for Christ. As after the long winter the birds come, and break out in all the trees, and sing their renewed songs of gladness in the beginning of the year, so may we have the voices of those who sing forth the praises of thy salvation. Is it not time for the singing of birds again? We beseech of thee that the winter may be passed, and that there may be all the signs and tokens of thy coming with thy great grace and power in the midst of this congregation. And we pray, O Lord our God, that we may every one of us search out the hidden places of our life; that we may put in order everything in our household, and everything throughout all our lives. May we endeavor to prepare the way, and cast it up, that the ransomed of the Lord

may return and come to Zion. Bring in the ransomed ones. Go forth for those who are in captivity, Bring them back with shoutings of joy.

And now, Lord, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless every one in thy presence according to his individual need—for thou knowest what that need is. Thou and the heart that suffers only know the secret suffering. And we pray that thou wilt succor those who are in the bondage of fear, and those who are in despondency, and those who are overmatched in their conflicts with life, and who every day fall down and add sin to the consciousness of their imperfections. In every way, O Lord, have compassion upon those who do not know how to help themselves, and who are crushed indeed. Lift them up. Speak comfortable words to them. And though they sit desolate, and the shame of their nakedness oppresses them, O thou that didst rescue by thine own life, and that didst give thine own blood to save thy creatures, O thou that art full of mercy alike to the children of sin and of affliction, succor them.

And we pray O Lord our God, that thou wilt be very near to any who are in thy presence to-day—strangers among us, yet not strangers to the household of faith. And wilt thou grant that here they may find the open gate. Here may they find the altar. Here may they find their Father's house, and take bread from his table. And if their thoughts go backward toward those whom they have loved, Lord go with their thoughts. And multiply the blessings which they receive. Open all honor and truth to them.

And we pray, if there are any wandering aimless and discouraged, strangers in a strange land, with staff broken and every hope cut off, that they may not give up all confidence. May they know how to wait patiently on the Lord, and to be sure that their cup shall be filled, and that their staff shall yet be established in strength. And when their eyesight fails, may they have faith.

And we pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt be very near to those who are seeking to restore themselves to their first-love. And have compassion upon all that are endeavoring to break away from the bonds and the thralls which have bound them and held them so long. Are there not many who stretch out their hands from prison windows which they cannot escape from? O thou that didst come to open the prison-doors, come and bring them forth. Are there not many the sound of whose chains is in thine ear, and who cannot free themselves? O thou that didst break the chain of the captive, we pray that thou wilt help the helpless, and succor the needy, and take care of the outcast, and breathe the Spirit into us by which we, too, in our places, shall endeavor to do the same work of the Lord.

May we all remember that our time is short, and that our day is hastening. The sun is going down already upon us. What we have to do we must do quickly. The night cometh when no man can labor. May we therefore gird our loins with the fresh consecration of a new zeal. May we begin from this day forth and do the Lord's work, wherever in his providence we are planted. We commend ourselves to thee for life, and for death, and for immortality.

And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit, shall be the praise forever and ever. *Amen.*

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